



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,633

WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE 1998

45p

32-PAGE NEWS SECTION WITH 9 PAGES OF SPORT

NEW 24-PAGE BROADSHEET REVIEW



If you love football... we've got Ronaldo, Rio and a roller-skating Marxist

If you hate football... we've got 98 ways to avoid France '98

PLUS MORE COMMENT, FASHION, ARTS, LISTINGS



Teachers told to cut holidays

TEACHERS' annual holidays could be cut by five weeks a year under proposals to be drawn up by local authority leaders today.

In return, the councils, who employ 400,000 teachers, want the Government to spend an extra £60m on education. Some of that money would have to be used to raise teachers' salaries to compensate for the big cut in holidays from 13 weeks to eight. Teachers' leaders said last night that they would only consider the change in working conditions if they were given a 50 per cent pay increase.

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

The idea of cutting teachers' holidays has been circulating in Whitehall since the election, and Margaret Hodge, the influential chairman of the Commons Select Committee on Education, recently suggested such a move.

Under the authorities' plans, the five weeks cut from the holidays would be used for in-service training, staff meetings, parents' evenings and lesson preparation. That would mean that teachers would not need to

work such long hours after school. Teachers would be required to come into school on 215 days a year, instead of the present 190 + 5 for in-service training, but the length of school terms would remain unchanged.

Members of the Local Government Association, the umbrella body for local authorities, met David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education last week to discuss ways of raising standards. They believe their proposals will strengthen education ministers' case for more money.

Mr Blunkett is understood to be demanding an extra £60m for education from the Treasury. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, is due to announce the results of his comprehensive spending review next month.

Councils will call on the review body, which makes recommendations to the Government on teachers' pay, to make the cut in the profession's holidays in return for a substantial investment in schools.

Graham Lane, the Local Government Association's education committee chairman, said: "Teachers need modern

conditions and rewards - especially those who are helping raise standards - but they must realise the present system of holidays no longer works."

The proposals will be drawn up at a meeting today of the National Association of Employers of School Teachers.

Councils are not proposing that all the extra money is used to increase teachers' salaries. It would also help to cut class sizes, pay for a classroom assistant in every primary school and employ staff to free teachers from administrative jobs.

secretary of the National Association of School Teachers Union of Women Teachers, said: "We are not going to contemplate this kind of thing unless there is a massive pay rise in the region of 50 per cent."

"What are we going to do in this five weeks? We are trying to cut bureaucracy and meetings at the moment. Are they going to pay us more to waste our time? I don't think the country can afford to reduce teachers' holidays because no-one will come forward for teaching unless they also give teachers a massive pay rise. It

is a matter of deep regret that the local government employers have not discussed these matters with the representatives of teachers before publishing them in this way."

Teachers pointed out that the profession relies heavily on women who would find it difficult to combine their job with home life if holidays were shortened.

The top rate of pay for an un-promoted classroom teacher is around £22,000 and more than half teachers are at this level or below.

Mr Lane said: "If local education authorities are to drive

up standards in schools the Government must be prepared to spend money. Proper rewards and better conditions of work for teachers, in return for a modernised contract for employees and cutting class sizes, are the main ways we can attract high-quality people into the service and also retain good teachers already working in the profession."

The Government has begun a recruitment drive to attract more people into teaching because applications for teacher training are falling sharply, particularly in maths and science.

Youths in Lawrence murder case win legal aid

BY KATHY MARKS

FOUR OF the five white youths suspected of murdering Stephen Lawrence in a racist attack have been granted legal aid to fight attempts to drag them before the public inquiry into the black teenager's death.

The five were scheduled to appear next Monday before the hearing in Elephant and Castle, south London, after a ruling by the inquiry chairman, Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, obliging them to attend.

Lawyers for the youths, who were charged with the murder but never convicted, announced three weeks ago that they intended to apply for judicial review of Sir William's ruling. Four of them - Neil Acourt, his brother Jamie, Gary Dobson and David Norris - were refused emergency legal aid. But yesterday the Legal Aid Board announced that its decision had been overturned on appeal.

Neil Acourt and the fifth suspect, Luke Knight, were arrested and charged two weeks after Stephen was stabbed to death in Edham, south-east London, in April 1993. Two months later, the Crown Prosecution Service dropped the charges.

In 1995, Stephen's parents, Neville and Doreen, brought a private prosecution against all five. The case against Mr Dobson, Mr Knight and Neil Acourt was abandoned at the committal proceedings. At the Crown Court trial in April 1996, Jamie Acourt and Mr Norris were acquitted after their identification evidence was ruled inadmissible.

Lawyers for the youths intend to fight the summons on the grounds that the inquiry has no legal powers to call them, and its own terms of reference are outside the relevant law. The case is expected to be heard in the immediate future. The Lawrences declined to comment yesterday.

Full report, page 4

And finally... at 4.30 today a man will kick a ball



Scottish football supporters celebrate a goal in a match against all-comers beneath the Eiffel Tower in Paris

Brian Harris

BY JOHN DAVIDSON

AT PRECISELY 4.30 this afternoon one man will blow a whistle, another will kick a ball and the world's biggest and most manic sporting party will be off and running. The planet is about to go Coup du Monde mad.

An estimated 500 million people will be watching today's opening game between champions Brazil and humble Scotland, the first of a record 64. By the time we get to the final, on June 12, a staggering four billion will be tuned in - that's three quarters of the world's population, and the biggest audience ever.

From Bogota to Bologna, via Bedford and Bridlington, celebrations and commiserations will be shouted, sworn and drunk over the next month in every language under the sun by folk in shirts of every hue. More than ever before we will become part of a global village, glued to the communal tube for every twist and turn of drama. Planet Football will have come of age.

Celebrations in Paris actually started last night, with a carnival of bizarre and colourful events, some of which were even officially planned. Four separate parades were led by 60-foot high giants, to symbolise the four footballing continents, and converged on the Place de la Concorde. If well-intentioned, perhaps these Teletubby look-alikes were carrying a message rather too high brow for most of those watching. Romeo, for instance, representing Europe, "lives as an art, a show, a never-ending celebration. He is a product of a culture that, since antiquity, has been wavering between mannerism and wealth..." and so on.

Showing not too much of either were the thousands of Scots fans who were more than holding their own on the Champs-Élysées in a very unofficial festival of football, involving fans from most of the competing nations and which completely blocked the pavements. If they were feeling ripped off or impoverished by the non-arrival of hugely expensive tickets, the Scots were not showing it. Perhaps they were oblivious.

A move by Le Folies Bergère, the Paris cabaret famous for its dancing girls, may possibly provide them with a chance to recoup losses, in Full Monty style. The club is putting on a show of male strippers in order to cater for "football widows" during the competition.

Back home, the country is expected to completely close

down this afternoon as Scotland face their most important and illustrious game in their history. In Britain as a whole, a survey has found that almost one in three men will be taking time off work to watch the tournament at home. Monday afternoon, when England meet Tunisia in their opening game with a 1.30 kick-off, is expected to witness a mass exodus from factories and offices. Some firms are bowing to the inevitable, with Cadbury's in Birmingham piping live radio commentary to its 4,000 staff to try and keep as many as possible at their work.

British brewers are rubbing their hands in anticipation of the alcoholic floodgates opening. Pubs everywhere have finished bolting in the big screens and ordering extra barrels for the cellar, and it will be there that the relatively new national pastime of pub football will reach its zenith - fostering with it a kind of rowdy community spirit not seen since VE Day, or at least 1966.

Bookies are also looking forward to a lot of action. Over £150



European superstate is dead, says Kohl

CHANCELLOR Helmut Kohl and President Jacques Chirac last night declared in a joint letter to Tony Blair that the idea of the European super-state was dead.

The letter also contained a clear call to the Prime Minister, in the presidency of the European Union, to put closer integration on the agenda for the weekend EU summit in Cardiff, which Mr Blair will be chairing. But as Mr Blair completed a

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Editor

hectic round of jet diplomacy in the capitals of Europe, Downing Street last night hailed the letter as a diplomatic coup for the Prime Minister's call for a "third way" between federalism and Euro-scepticism.

The two leaders said: "It cannot be the goal of European policy to establish a European central state, that is to say, a

centrally structured Europe. We must do all we can... to preserve and foster the diversity and richness of Europe's political, cultural and regional traditions and characteristics."

The Prime Minister's spokesman said their letter echoed Mr Blair's speech to the French National Assembly on 3 March calling for a third way in Europe, integrating where it made sense but emphasising the need for subsidiarity, al-

lowing countries to decide their own laws where appropriate.

The Government is keen to see closer cooperation on diplomacy and defence over issues such as Kosovo.

The joint letter urged Mr Blair at the Cardiff summit to order home affairs and justice ministers to draw up a plan of action for the December meeting in Vienna.

That closely fits in with Britain's approach to closer

cooperation across borders on tackling crime.

Downing Street said Britain supported closer integration on pollution, the environment, tackling crime and drugs smuggling.

The letter was being seen at Downing Street as a "highly significant" step away from a European super-state, which the Euro-sceptics had insisted was on the agenda.

Blair in Europe, page 16

INSIDE
FULL COMMENTS
PAGE 2
TODAY'S TV
SECTION 2, PAGE 24

HOME NEWS
Lord Archer has launched a fightback, saying he is neither a genius nor a saint
PAGE 2

POLITICS
A senior civil servant was criticised by MPs over the arms to Sierra Leone affair
PAGE 10

FOREIGN NEWS
A trial in Utah will lift the lid on the state's hidden secret - polygamy
PAGE 17

BUSINESS
Thistle Hotels has had several approaches that may lead to a bid
PAGE 18

SPORT
Chelsea have signed French World Cup player Marcel Desailly for £4.6m.
PAGE 32

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INDEX

HOME NEWS

PAGES 2-12

Woodward trustees reject claim

Supporters of Louise Woodward, the British au pair, voted unanimously to continue backing her despite claims her mother had defrauded a fund set up for her defence. Page 5

Atom test vets lose legal case

A fight for compensation by British nuclear test veterans ground to halt yesterday, when the European Court of Human Rights threw out their latest legal challenge. Page 7

Inquiry over 'fake' documentary

Carlton Television faces a second investigation by the television watchdog over more accusations of faking documentaries - this time on Cuba's Fidel Castro. Page 9

FOREIGN NEWS

PAGES 13-17

Nigeria pledges civilian rule

Nigeria's military government plans to stick to its aim to restore civilian rule on 1 October in accordance with the promise of dead military ruler General Sani Abacha. Page 13

India pushes ahead with temple

India's most contentious building project, siting a Hindu temple on the site of a destroyed mosque, has been secretly under construction for the past seven years. Page 15

BUSINESS NEWS

PAGES 18-23

Severn Trent in £1.4bn water bid

Severn Trent is bidding to take over the water supply for the German city of Berlin later this year. Page 18

Mortgage penalties may end

Building societies are to call for the abolition of redemption penalties on all variable rate mortgages. Page 19

SPORTS NEWS

PAGES 24-32

Scotland prepare to meet Brazil

Scotland manager Colin Hendry leads his country against Brazil in the opening game of World Cup. Pages 30, 32

Coach takes 'rap' for rugby rout

Clive Woodward, the England rugby union coach, has taken responsibility for the 76-0 defeat against Australia. Page 24

WEDNESDAY REVIEW

24-PAGE BROADSHEET SECTION

Donald Macintyre

'Lord Cranborne, apparently with the blessing of William Hague, is leading the Tories towards an electoral brick wall over the House of Lords.' Page 3

Mick Jagger

'We are very disappointed to have to postpone our British concert. This was a very difficult decision for us and it is not a tax protest.' Page 5

Fashion

'Tennis starlets obviously like the attention - although there is no excuse for frilly knickers, on or off the court.' Page 13

Letters	2	Finance	14-15
Leaders and comment	3-5	Money	16-18
Law Report	5	Listings	21-23
Obituaries	6-7	Games	23
Features	8-9	Radio, Satellite TV	23
Arts	10-11	Concise crossword	23
Fashion	12-15	Today's TV	24

Cryptic crossword, section one, page 32

Mowlam
mole out
to wreck
peaceBY DAVID MCKITTRICK
AND ALAN MURDOCH

THE Government is facing up to the unpalatable fact that an organised campaign of sabotage is being waged against its Northern Ireland policy from within the highest levels of its administration in Belfast.

The leaking of yet another sensitive document from within the Northern Ireland Office has left no room for doubt that at least one person with access to secret papers has been systematically feeding them to Unionist sources and hence to the media.

The most recent leak took place this week, when the Ulster Unionist MP Jeffrey Donaldson received a document whose disclosure was plainly designed to cause personal embarrassment to Mo Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

It showed that she recently held a telephone conversation with a senior Sinn Féin member, Rita O'Hare, on the question of the membership of the new commission on the future of Northern Ireland. Ms O'Hare lives in the Republic of Ireland since she is wanted for questioning in Northern Ireland about a sniping attack on soldiers in West Belfast in the early 1970s.

Mr Donaldson said: "It's a disgrace. One wonders to what extent the Government is prepared to pander to the demands of Sinn Féin and the IRA regarding the future of the RUC. There will be many people who will share my deep concern that the Secretary of State should consult about the future of the RUC with someone like Rita O'Hare who is wanted for questioning by the RUC."

The memo, which summarised a flurry of diplomatic and political activity before the commission's membership was

announced, was drawn up by Ms Mowlam's private secretary, John McKerrill, and circulated only to two ministers and eight senior officials. Marked confidential and dated 4 June, it took only four days to reach Mr Donaldson.

Although a certain amount of leaking took place during the time of Sir Patrick Mayhew, Ms Mowlam's predecessor in Belfast, the trickle has grown into a flow since she took charge.

"My thoughts are that leaks are bad for government," she said yesterday. "It's damaging and we will make every effort we can to find out who is responsible. We are today talking to the police to see if they will consider an investigation on this issue."

Previous leaks have included a key document outlining the Government's approach to last year's marching season and a more recent document setting out its public relations strategy in relation to the referendum on the Good Friday agreement. In each case the intention appears to have been to cause political damage and disruption.

The persistence of the leaks appears to be a sign that one or more people with access to confidential documents is so opposed to the Government's approach that they are prepared to risk ignominious discharge, and possibly prosecution.

Ireland's foreign affairs minister, David Andrews, said: "The leakers are opposed to the peace process and should examine their consciences, whoever they are. But the process is too strong. The votes in the recent past, the referendums (show) the strength of the agreement, and 'sneaky little people in the Northern Ireland Office are not going to obstruct the pursuit of what we all want to achieve - a permanent peace on the island of Ireland."



Hats off to Lord Archer of Weston-Super-Mare, Lionel Blair and Lord Beaumont who will be line dancing for the launch of Help the Aged's Longest Day Event which starts on 21 June
Glynn Griffiths

Archer replies to allegations
in bid to rescue ambitionsBY ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor

LORD ARCHER of Weston-Super-Mare bounced back off the ropes again yesterday, saying he was neither genius nor saint, but he had raised more than £50 million for charity.

A potential Conservative candidate for the post of mayor of London, Lord Archer's background has been referred for investigation by the Tories' new ethics and integrity committee - set up by William Hague in order to protect the reputation of the party.

Last night, in the London Evening Standard, Lord Archer replied to charges which had been levelled against him by Paul Foot, the campaigning journalist, on 26 March, headlined by the *Standard* at the time: "Why this man is unfit to be mayor."

Describing the allegations as "trivialities", Lord Archer said: "Heaven knows I made mistakes in my life. I am neither genius nor saint. But perhaps future profiles might mention that over recent years, I have

raised more than £50 million for charity, never once claiming even my expenses. Just last year, I raised £2m as a charity auctioneer."

Lord Archer accepted that in a democracy anyone seeking public office opened themselves up to "endless attacks" - some fair, some unfair - but he indicated that he had not yet made his mind up about mayoral office, saying twice: "I'll decide to run..."

As part of his replies to Mr Foot, Lord Archer said: "He never claimed his father had won the Distinguished Conduct Medal until the DCM League had mistakenly informed him that he had. He did not get any A-levels, nor did he mislead Oxford University by telling them that he had, but he was a full member of Brasenose College, and did obtain a full blue in athletics. He did not pass himself off as

a research graduate for his marriage certificate, but the chaplain who had conducted the wedding ceremony must have misunderstood."

Yes, he had mistakenly thought he was the youngest member of the Greater London Council in 1967, and he had helped some councillors with their expense claim forms, "and the sums would have been minuscule."

Yes, he had mistakenly claimed that he was the youngest MP in the Commons after he won the Louth by-election in December 1969.

It was complete fiction that he systematically fiddled his expenses when fund-raising for the UN Association. He had raised several million pounds for the organisation and there had been an expenses "discrepancy" of around £80.

In the early 1970s, he had been "conned" into making a bad investment in a Canadian company, Aquablaze. He had refused to become a bankrupt,

had taken up novel-writing, and had paid off his creditors over seven years.

He had been totally innocent of insider dealing over Anglia Television shares; the matter had been investigated by DTI inspectors, and he had not been charged.

And he had been awarded £500,000 libel damages over the Monica Coghlan "matter", and had given the money to charity.

Lord Archer also said that he had been stopped in a Toronto store 25 years ago. "I was carrying two suits on their hangers over my shoulder, and was looking for the shirt department... I had no intention of taking anything without paying... and I was not arrested, charged, nor did I admit to any theft because I had not stolen anything..."

"I told the store officials who I was and what had happened and the misunderstanding was quickly sorted out. It was hardly a major incident."

Warning over hospital death-rate leagues

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

HOSPITAL death-rate league tables announced by the Government could lead to top-performing hospitals being swamped with patients. That was the stark warning yesterday by the specialist who has taken over children's heart surgery in Bristol following the deaths of 29 children.

Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, said in a speech last night that the "appalling tragedy" at Bristol could not be allowed to happen again.

He announced a new duty on trusts to investigate concerns about clinical quality and a new requirement on all doctors to take part in a national audit programme which would involve checks on their individual performance.

Mr Ash Pawade, paediatric heart surgeon at the United Bristol Hospital Trust, said the trust's record had improved

dramatically since the two surgeons, James Wisheart and Janardan Dhasmana, who are currently the subject of a General Medical Council inquiry, stopped operating on children in 1995.

Latest figures showed a mortality rate of 3.5 per cent for congenital children's heart surgery at Bristol between April 1996 and March 1997, compared to a national average of 6.1 per cent.

"I think it is right that the

public should be able to see these type of figures. But it is difficult to see how the NHS will cope with the movement that the league tables will bring about. Certain units that do well will obviously be in greater demand and people will want to be treated at them instead of at other centres," he said.

Mr Dobson yesterday launched a 10-year programme of measures to improve clinical information which he said was necessary to safeguard patients and restore public confidence.

Hospital league tables to be published in October will include death rates after heart attack and after fractured neck of femur (broken hip), and rates of post-operative complications.

Other measures of clinical quality will be developed for each specialty and all doctors will be required to take part in monitoring their performance and comparing it with national averages.

"Bristol shows that it is not enough merely for individual clinicians to know their comparative figures," Mr Dobson added. "To ensure that results from audit feed into action, individual doctors will be required to share their results confidentially with the medical director of the trust..."

"The net result will be that patients will be assured that services at their local hospital are being monitored and are of a consistently high standard."

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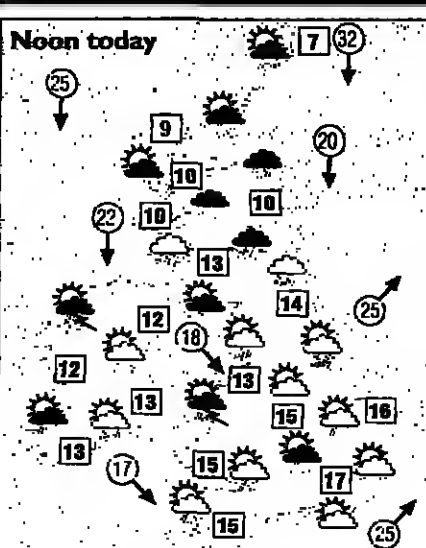
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BRITAIN TODAY



OUTLOOK

Cold and windy across Scotland with a wet day in the east. Western Scotland will be showery and this mix of sun and showers will spread east for the afternoon, and the showers will be heavy with the risk of hail. The remainder of the UK will have a rather cool day with a mixture of sunny spells and showers. Many of the showers will be heavy and possibly thundery, the showers merging at times in Northern Ireland and northern England into longer spells of rain.

NEXT FEW DAYS

Cool everywhere on Thursday and very showery in south-east England but elsewhere there will be more in the way of sunshine between the showers. Rain in the west later on Friday but plenty of morning sunshine which will last through the day in the east with the rain not arriving until nightfall. It will remain cool over the coming weekend with the risk of showers in all parts but there will also be some spells of sunshine.

LIGHTING UP TIMES

Belfast	21.58	to	04.48
Birmingham	21.29	to	04.29
Bristol	21.26	to	04.34
Glasgow	22.00	to	04.32
London	21.16	to	04.44
Manchester	21.35	to	04.40
Newcastle	21.43	to	04.28

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	02:42	6.7	15:00	6.9
Liverpool	12:15	8.9	00:32	9.2
Auxmouth	09:06	12.5	20:27	12.8
Hull (Humber Dock)	07:15	8.3	19:37	8.2
Greenock	01:34	3.1	13:38	3.0
Dun Laoghaire	12:37	3.7	00:49	3.9

AIR QUALITY

Today's readings	NO ₂	Pollan	O ₃
London	Good	Low/Mod	Good
S. England	Good	Low/Mod	Good
Wales	Good	Low	Good
C. England	Good	Low/Mod	Good
N. England	Good	Low	Good
Scotland	Good	Low	Good
N. Ireland	Good	Low	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises:	04.44
Sun sets:	21.16
Moon rises:	21.17
Moon sets:	05.24
Full Moon:	Today

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts dial 0800 5009. The map indicates by the map (light) Sources: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc. VAT).

YESTERDAY

BRITISH ISLES WEATHER

Most recent available figure at noon
KEY: C: Cloudy; Cl: Clear; F: Fair; Fg: fog; H: haze; M: mist; R: rain; S: sun; Sh: shower; Ss: snow; Th: thunder.

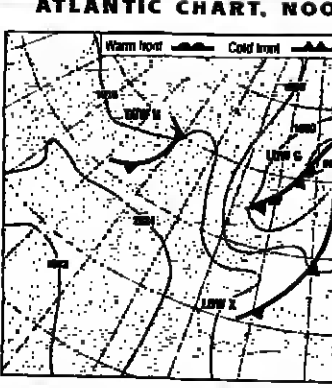
Aberdeen	Dr	11	52
Anglesey	S	16	61
Ayr	Dr	12	54
Belfast	D	15	59
Birmingham	Sh	18	64
Blackpool	F	18	64
Bournemouth	C	17	63
Brighton	R	15	59
Bristol	C	19	66
Cardiff	F	16	61
Carlisle	R	15	59
Dover	R	16	61
Dublin	C	18	64
Edinburgh	C	14	57
Exeter	F	18	64
Glasgow	R	15	59
Goucester	Fg	14	57
Harrogate	R	13	55
Leamington	F	18	64
Leeds	C	16	61
Leicester	R	16	61
Liverpool	C	17	63
London	C	19	66
Manchester	Sh	17	63
Newcastle	C	17	63
Oxford	C	19	66
Plymouth	F	20	63
Scarborough	S	15	59
Southampton	C	16	61
Southend	C	17	63
Stornoway	R	11	52
York	Sh	18	64

AIR QUALITY

Yesterday's readings	NO ₂	Pollan	O ₃
London	Good	Low	Good
S. England	Good	Low	Good
Wales	Good	Low	Good
C. England	Good	Low	Good
N. England	Good	Low	Good
Scotland	Good	Low	Good
N. Ireland	Good	Low	Good

THE WORLD

ATLANTIC CHART, NOON TODAY



THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Most recent available figure at noon local time

THE WORLD WIDE									
Most recent available figure at noon									
Algeria	26	70	France	18	64	Japan	27	81	
Argentina	28	82	Germany	18	64	Kenya	27	81	
Australia	17	63	Greece	22	72	Madagascar	27	81	
Austria	18	64	Hong Kong	22	72	Mali	27	81	
Bahamas	28	82	India	22	72	Mexico	27	81	
Bangladesh	28	82	Indonesia	22	72	Mozambique	27	81	
Barbados	28	82	Israel	22	72	Nicaragua	27	81	
Belize	28	82	Italy	22	72	Norway	27	81	
Bermuda	28	82	Japan	27	81	Peru	27	81	
Bhutan	28	82	Kenya	27	81	Poland	27	81	
Bolivia	28	82	Madagascar	27	81	Portugal	27	81	
Brazil	28	82	Mali	27	81	Romania	27	81	
Bulgaria	28	82	Mexico	27	81	Russia	27	81	
Cameroon	28	82	Mozambique	27	81	Senegal	27	81	
Canada	28	82	Nicaragua	27	81	Sierra Leone	27	81	
Chad	28	82	Norway	27	81	South Africa	27	81	
China	28	82	Peru	27	81	Spain	27	81	
Cote d'Ivoire	28	82	Poland	27	81	Sweden	27	81	
Cuba	28	82	Portugal	27	81	Switzerland	27	81	
Cyprus	28	82	Romania	27	81	Taiwan	27	81	
Czechia	28	82	Russia	27	81	Thailand	27	81	
Denmark	28	82	Senegal	27	81	Tanzania	27	81	
Dominican Rep.	28	82	Sierra Leone	27	81	Togo	27	81	
Dominican Rep.	28	82	South Africa	27	81	Tunisia	27	81	
Ecuador	28	82	Spain	27	81	Uganda	27	81	
Egypt	28	82	Sweden	27	81	Ukraine	27	81	
El Salvador	28	82	Switzerland	27	81	USA	27	81	
Equatorial Guinea	28	82	Taiwan	27	81	Venezuela	27	81	
Ethiopia	28	82	Thailand	27	81	Yemen	27	81	
Fiji	28	82	Tanzania	27	81	Zambia	27	81	
Finland	28	82	Togo	27	81	Zimbabwe	27	81	
France	18	64	Tunisia	27	81				
Germany	18	64	Uganda	27	81				
			Ukraine	27	81				

Has Geoffrey Robinson's Tuscan villa broken the rules of the House?

BY FRAN ABRAMS,
NIC CICUTTI
AND ANNE HANLEY
in San Gimignano

GEOFFREY ROBINSON, the Paymaster-General, is facing a formal complaint that he broke parliamentary rules over a villa, former monastery and farmland in Tuscany. The property is owned by two companies controlled by Mr Robinson, which have not been registered in the Commons Register of Members' Interests.

Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, has written to Sir Gordon Downey, the parliamentary commissioner for standards, to ask for an investigation. His letter, to be delivered today, could spark the fourth investigation into Mr Robinson's affairs since he took office last May.

According to company records held in Siena, Italy, Mr Robinson first bought the property in 1992. It consists of his holiday home, Villa Mucchio - visited for the last two summers by Tony Blair and his family - a disused monastery which is being renovated, a church and around 140 acres of farmland.

The property is held in two companies: Castelli Mucchio - Villa Robinson Geoffrey, and Borgo Mucchio Di Sotto Sals. It was bought for around £330,000 but is now believed to be worth around £1.5m.

Sir Gordon has already completed an investigation into Mr Robinson's involvement with an offshore trust and with shares in Coventry City Football Club. Mr Robinson was told by Sir Gordon that his interest would have been better registered. He is still looking into two more claims that Mr Robinson failed to declare directorships.

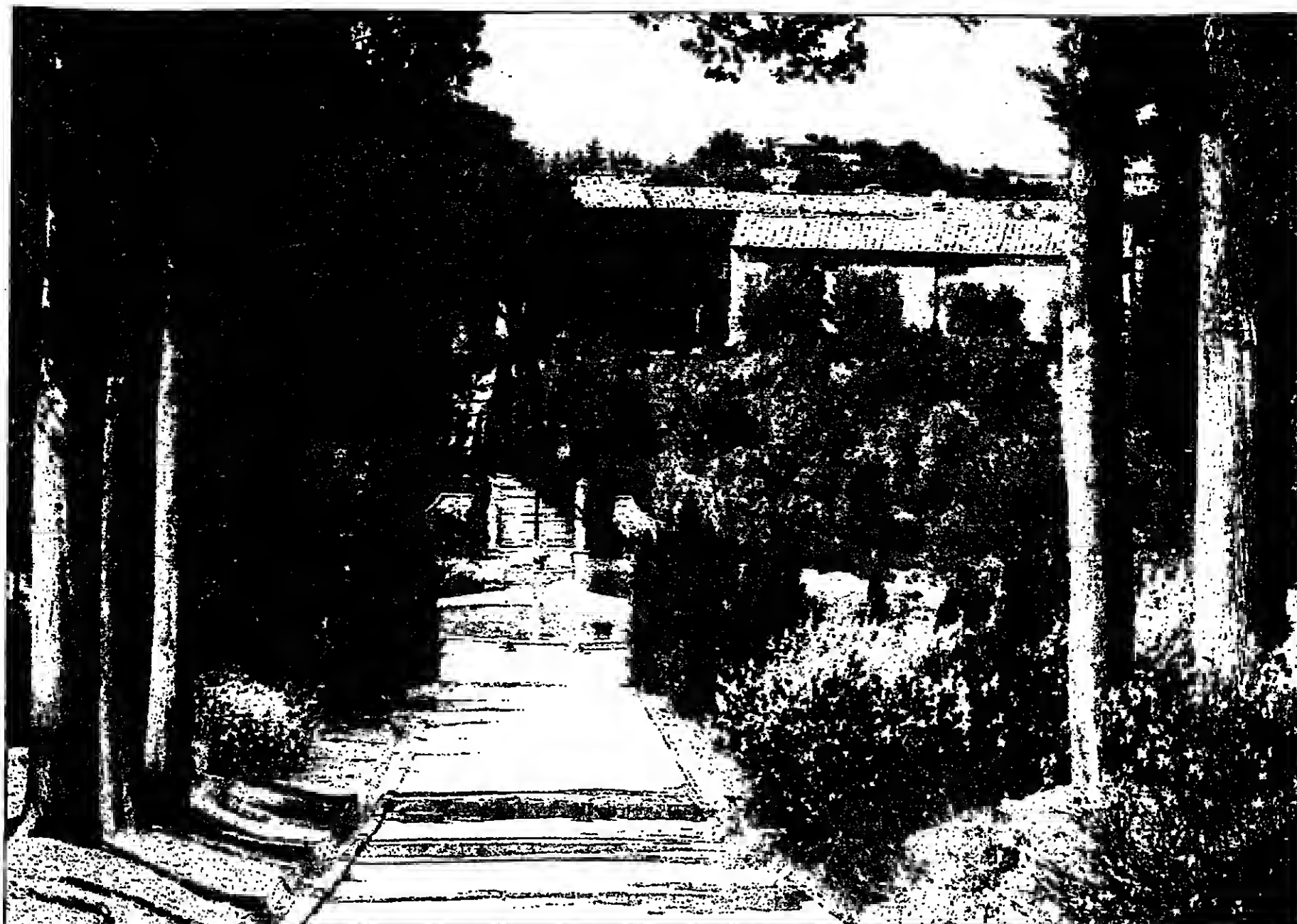
Mr Maude's letter questions whether the Paymaster-General has broken parliamentary rules by failing to declare relevant pecuniary interests. "I do not wish to distract you from your two existing investigations into Mr Robinson. However, in view of what is at first sight a clear breach of a rule to which great importance has been attached in recent years, I must ask you to investigate this as a matter of urgency," he wrote.

The guide that governs what members they should put on the register, says that any land or property which has a substantial value should be listed. Although second homes do not apply, farms on which MPs have residences are registrable because they have "a substantial value aside from the residential use".

Shareholdings in companies should also be registered if they are worth more than £25,000 or if they amount to more than 1 per cent of the share capital. Members must list "interests in shareholdings held by the member, either personally or with or on behalf of the member's spouse or dependent children".

An earlier complaint from Nigel Evans, Conservative MP for Ribbles Valley, asked if Mr Robinson should have registered income he received from the farmland on the estate.

Last night, Mr Robinson said: "In response to a letter from Nigel Evans MP last August Sir Gordon Downey considered the issue of de-



declaration of Villa Mucchio and Borgo Mucchio. He concluded that there was no breach of the rules relating to registration.

Yesterday, the sensor at the end of Geoffrey Robinson's drive was playing up, and the tall iron gate swung forlornly open at intervals. It was the only flaw in this picture of perfection in the Tuscan countryside. A white road leads up through cypresses and pines to an open space where a dolphin-adorned fountain plays. ("He brought it from England," said one local, incredulous that anyone would import statuary to Italy.)

On a rise to the left is a stone chapel, recently reconsecrated, and used by the Robinson family, according to local lore. Behind it is a huddle of buildings - a former monastery - all is quiet, but the paraphernalia of renovation work is strewn all around. Ahead is a sweep of idyllic landscape. To the right is Mr Robinson's Tuscan bolt-hole, Il Mucchio - "Pile" as in the common Italian expression, un mucchio di soldi, heaps of money. It nestles in the hills, near San Gimignano, which with its 13 towers is popular with the British chattering classes.

According to Mr Robinson, it was his wife, Marie Elena, who first thought of buying more than the villa almost seven years ago. "My wife



said if you buy that Italian villa you must buy the Borgo as well. I couldn't see what she wanted with a whole village. But I love it now. We've had the chapel redecorated and reconsecrated. It's very pretty," he told an interviewer.

The Blairs have holidayed there twice last year and the year before. Mr Blair fell in love with the surroundings: "Tuscany? I love it, there's so much history, culture, the weather's great, and I like the wine.

It's fantastic," he told the Italian newspaper *La Nazione*, in 1996.

The late 18th- or early 19th-century villa was built and owned by the Pompononi counts, and has gardens of about nine acres. To one side of the villa is a 45ft swimming pool. In the summer, meals are cooked by Mr Robinson's Galician chef and served under giant umbrellas on a patio. Diners can look out on to a valley of olive trees leading to San Gimignano. The entire property, bought in



The approach (top) to the Villa Mucchio (left), near San Gimignano, owned by Geoffrey Robinson (above), at the centre of a complaint over the breaking of parliamentary rules



Tom Pilsdon

1992 for about £330,000 but now believed to be worth around £1.5m, includes about 140 acres of farm land. This is let out rent free to a local business, run by brothers from a nearby town, which uses it to grow wheat and sunflowers.

Records in Siena show that the villa is owned by a company, Castelli Mucchio - Villa Robinson Geoffrey EC - SAS. The joint shareholders are Mr Robinson, with 19.8 million shares and his daughter Veronique,

who holds 200,000 shares. Borgo Mucchio Di Sotto SRL, a second company also set up in July 1992, owns the monastery and surrounding farmland; Mr Robinson is listed as the sole administrator of this company.

The restoration work on the Borgo Sotto monastery has been going on for around 12 months or so. It is believed that it is being converted into about seven or eight flats. Locally, people say they believe that

Here's to you Mr Robinson ...

Born: Geoffrey Robinson, May 25, 1938, Sheffield.
Married: 1967, to Marie Elena Giorgio, a Maltese-born opera singer.
Career: Financial controller, British Leyland, 1971-72. Managing director Leyland Innocenti, Milan, 1972-3. MD and chief executive, Jaguar Cars, 1973-75. Labour MP for Coventry North West, since 1976. May 1997 appointed Paymaster General, refused to accept ministerial salary.
Fortune: Believed to be around £30 million.
Owms: The New Statesman magazine, Stanbell Ltd, administrative services, TransTec PLC, specialist engineers. Shares held in trust since May 1997.
Discretionary beneficiary with other family members of the Guernsey-based Orion Trust, worth at least £12 million.
Properties: Two Lutyens houses, Orchards in Surrey and Marsh Court in Hampshire. London flat in the grounds of the Grosvenor Hotel, overlooking Hyde Park. Flat in Cannes, estate in Tuscany.
Children: Veronique, 27, an accountant, and Alexander, 19.
Interests: Architecture, gardens and cars. Gave up his chauffeur-driven Daimlers for a ministerial Rover to avoid seeming grander than the Chancellor, Gordon Brown.

when completed the converted monastery will be used by "visiting VIPs".

The company that bought the monastery is allowed under its various aims and objects to engage in the "running of tourist accommodation and agri-tourist accommodation". It seems unlikely, however, that someone of Mr Robinson's wealth would want to turn the development into a commercial operation. An Irish architect is supervising the restoration of the monastery.

"The Pile" is a gracious, creamy-white mansion built at the end of the 18th century. So well buried is it down a long dirt track and in its copse of trees, that even near neighbours - and near is a relative concept in such an isolated spot - are dubious about its whereabouts.

Until, that is, you mention Tony Blair. Then, local youths will tear themselves away from afternoon soaks in bars and enthusiastically provide detailed directions. The Prime Minister's visit brought an army of curious Britons and Italians to the town.

"One man, an Italian, came with his little boy. He was desperate to show his son where Blair stayed," said the woman on the hotel desk. "He seemed to think it was an historic landmark."

MacKenzie teams up with Murdoch again for radio venture

KELVIN MACKENZIE, the infamous former Sun editor, has teamed up with his old proprietor, Rupert Murdoch, in his bid for the commercial radio station, Talk Radio.

News International, publisher of the Sun, the Times, the News of the World, and the Sunday Times, confirmed yesterday that it is to be a 20 per cent stakeholder in the consortium being put together by Mr

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Correspondent

MacKenzie. The deal re-unites Mr MacKenzie with the Australian-born media mogul after four years at rival Mirror Group Newspapers. It is thought Mr Murdoch agreed to support Mr MacKenzie's bid for the radio station in order to lure him out of control of the Mirror. For the last

six months Mr MacKenzie has overseen a revamp of the Mirror and is widely agreed to have improved the newspaper. Despite Mr Murdoch's Sun outselling the Mirror the Murdoch newspaper is losing sales faster and last week changed editors to try to imitate what Mr MacKenzie has achieved at the Mirror.

It is thought Mr Murdoch offered Mr MacKenzie the post of ed-

itor in chief of the Sun and the News of the World but the former editor wanted to run his own business.

Under present cross-media ownership regulations, News International could own 20 per cent of Talk Radio without triggering an investigation by the Radio Authority.

The MacKenzie bid for Talk Radio, home to broadcasters like Lorraine Kelly and Kirsty Young,

was boosted by the revelation yesterday that his other consortium partner is an investment house investment vehicle, MVI, which already owns 34 per cent of the station.

Mr MacKenzie departed the Sun in 1994 to become managing director of Mr Murdoch's satellite broadcaster BSkyB. However he left there to join Mirror Group's Live TV five months later after losing a power

battle with BSkyB's chief executive, Sam Chisholm. However, in his time at Mirror Group Mr MacKenzie maintained good relations with Mr Murdoch.

Mr MacKenzie's conduct in creating a consortium, which includes a rival newspaper group, while deputy chief executive of Mirror Group raised eyebrows in the City yesterday.

A rival bidder for control of the station emerged yesterday in the form of the station's management, led by Talk's managing director Paul Robinson who said that Mr MacKenzie lacked the experience to run a national radio station. However, he did concede that he would be willing to discuss a deal with the MacKenzie consortium.

Business, page 19



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4/HOME NEWS

The August car-buying frenzy is to be stopped with a new style of numberplate issued twice a year

End of the road for AUG 1

BY RANDEEP RAMESH
Transport Correspondent

CARS WILL be identified by town and region under plans for a new number plate system announced by the Government today. The new-look vehicle registration will see two number changes a year – to avoid the summer sales rush which the motor industry says disrupts car production.

There will also be a regional identifier of two characters – one representing a region of Britain, the other referring to a town – which will show where a car has been purchased. This is similar to the original system used before the second world war, when each county in Britain had an allocation of two-letter combinations.

The revamp will start in September 2001 – the biggest shake-up since 1963 – and ministers hope it will end the August dash by customers eager to drive off with a brand new car. More than half a million cars – nearly a quarter of the annual total – are sold in this one month, distorting carmakers' production schedules and causing chaos for dealers.

As an interim measure, the yearly change will be abandoned this year – meaning that motorists purchasing cars in March next year will have "T" plates and those buying in August 1999 will drive off in "V" registration vehicles.

Some will miss the social cachet derived from having the very latest registration plate. Drivers often put off trading up to a better model or marque simply to have the new number plate. Although registrations indicating the year of purchase were first introduced on 1 January 1963, it was not until four years later when the start of the new car year was moved to 1 August that sales took off.

This was the beginning of the ope-upmanship which now characterises the change of plate. Those with E plates in 1967 were outdone by those with the new August R plates and the tradition became embedded in motoring lore.

However the industry was not so pleased. Although happy



The usual rush for new number plates will end under proposals to begin in September 2001

Dylan Martinez

to sell cars – the best-ever August sales were achieved in 1997 when a bumper 525,539 cars were purchased – motor manufacturers say this could be more evenly spread throughout the year without harming current sales.

"We are very pleased to see the back of the current system. A change has been long overdue," said a spokesman for the Retail Motor Industry Federation, the trade association for dealerships. "The August sys-

tem has been a complete headache and a classic way of how not to do things. Car buyers will benefit from the change as dealers will be more specific about delivery dates."

A source close to Gavin Strang, the transport minister who will launch the Government's plans, said that the new system would last for "at least 40 years".

Motoring organisations welcomed the moves saying that in the rush to satisfy demand

many dealers let cars go "without proper preparation". "We get dozens of calls for new cars in early August, because cars leave forecourts without being fully roadworthy," said the RAC. The system began with the letter A being placed after the numbers on a registration plate, so that cars registered in 1963 would have plates such as BCD 123A.

Once the alphabet was exhausted, the year-indicator letter moved to the front of the

plate, which would read, say, A123 BCD. This year will see the prefix letter S introduced.

By 2001, a typical number plate will look like this: ABC 12 YZ. The first three letters are specific to the car, the next two numbers will refer to the year the car was bought and the last two characters will denote the place of purchase.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency will still sell much sought-after plates such as ME 1 ME and YOU 1 DO to

drivers who wish to personalise their number plates. At present, such sales generate millions.

Some experts were predicting yesterday some number plates would become highly prized for the status a registration number denoting a fashionable part of Britain would confer.

Police in Britain are keen to see such a system, because it would help trace stolen cars.

Regional plates are not new. For example, many cars regis-

tered in Birmingham still have an "O" in the middle of the three letters on a plate. However, because of the way new cars are distributed, the registration number no longer automatically relates to the place they are purchased.

Another problem is that not all cities and towns have one code that is unique to them. For instance, "PO" is just one of many combinations of letters that show a car was registered in Portsmouth.

Billie-Jo's carers tell of prowler threat

BY LOUISE JURY

THE FOSTER family of teenager Billie-Jo Jenkins was living in fear of a prowler at the time of her death, a court heard yesterday.

They had decided to move home because they felt they were being watched, Peter Gaimster, a family friend told Lewes Crown Court, Sussex. Billie-Jo Jenkins, 13, was found savagely beaten around the head on the patio of her foster family's home in Hastings, East Sussex, in February last year. Sion Jenkins, 40, her foster father, is accused of her murder, based on forensic evidence such as microscopic blood spots on his clothes. He denies her murder.

Yesterday the court was read Peter Gaimster's statement, taken last year, in which he described a dinner party at the Jenkins' home a week before Billie-Jo's death. At the dinner Sion Jenkins discussed how a prowler might have got around the back of the house and showed Mr Gaimster extra security lighting that had been fitted outside.

The defendant told his friend that his car had been vandalised, the family had received "strange" telephone calls and they had "had enough". They intended to move house. "It was obvious they were worried. They felt sure they were being watched," Mr Gaimster said.

Under cross-examination by Anthony Scrivener QC, the court heard Mr Gaimster believed Billie-Jo had done well with the Jenkins family in the five years since she was fostered from her natural family in the East End of London.

De Tracey Christmas, a police officer who looked after the family the evening of the killing, said an "odd" incident occurred that night. As Sion Jenkins went to leave the home of a neighbour who was looking after the family, he refused to wear his blue fleece jacket.

"I just felt it was a little odd because I was extremely cold and had been most of the evening," De Christmas said. The trial continues.

Detectives 'should have sued Lawrence family'

BY KATHY MARKS

THE former third highest-ranking officer in the Metropolitan Police said yesterday that he believed detectives should have sued Stephen Lawrence's father, Neville, for accusing them of racism.

The public inquiry also heard that former Deputy Assistant Commissioner David Osland wrote a memo to the Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, five months after Stephen was murdered, in which he said that his patience with the Lawrence family was "wearing thin".

Mr Osland, who has since retired and is now a Conservative councillor, was in charge of policing in south-east London in April 1993 when Stephen was stabbed to death by a white gang in the suburb of Eltham.

Yesterday Stephen Kamlish, counsel for the Lawrences, accused him of insensitivity in his public pronouncements on the murder investigation. He also suggested that, like another senior officer who has appeared before the inquiry, Mr Osland did not know the legal grounds on which suspects can be arrested.

Mr Kamlish referred to an interview that Mr Osland gave last December to the *Croydon Advertiser*, a local newspaper, after publication of a Police Complaints Authority report. The report said no evidence was found to support claims by Mr Lawrence and his wife, Doreen, that the investigation had been hampered by racism.

In the interview, Mr Osland said he was disappointed that Mr Lawrence had since repeated the allegation. "My advice to the officers concerned would be to consider legal action," he said. "The Lawrences seem happy to accept the findings of the report where it suits them, but not where it doesn't."

Asked to elaborate yesterday, he said: "There comes a time when enough is enough. The officers referred to by Mr



Doreen and Neville Lawrence, who was criticised

Lawrence are identifiable. How long does it go on, was my view, how long do we have to suffer these allegations of racism?"

To jeers from a packed public gallery, he added: "I know that these officers have become quite ill as a result of these allegations. There comes a time when you want to move on, and maybe one way of sorting things out finally would be to take action against Mr Lawrence."

Mr Osland, whose comments prompted Mr Lawrence to leave the inquiry chamber,

was also asked about his memo to Sir Paul Condon in September 1993. In it, he wrote: "Our patience is wearing thin on 3 Area (south-east London), not only with the Lawrence family and their representatives, but also with self-appointed public and media commentators."

Mr Kamlish asked him: "With these grieving parents, whose son had been killed five months earlier, your patience was wearing so thin that you thought you had better tell the Commissioner that?"

Mr Osland replied: "State-

ments were being made by the Lawrence family and their representatives which in our opinion were not helpful."

He rejected Mr Kamlish's claim that he was not aware that police needed only reasonable suspicion – and not evidence – in order to arrest suspects. But Mr Osland, who has a law degree, agreed that he had expressed the view that detectives did not have "sufficient evidence" to make arrests.

The inquiry heard that when Mr Osland was questioned by Kent police officers on behalf of the PCA, he said he believed that the arrests of the five prime suspects two weeks after the murder were "premature". Senior detectives now say that they could have arrested the youths within 48 hours and wish they had done so. The five were never convicted.

Mr Osland told Kent officers that it would have been "tenable" never to have arrested them. He said: "I felt it was not the role of police to give in to public pressure and adopt a different set of criteria because the murder happened to be racist."

The inquiry team yesterday asked the Metropolitan Police for a copy of an unpublished report that concluded that black men were more than four times more likely than whites to be stopped and searched in the street by police.

Mr Kamlish questioned the police about an article that appeared in *The Independent* on Monday, outlining the conclusions and recommendations of the report. He said that the figures appeared to be "a matter of concern".

Last weekend, Scotland Yard indicated that there were no plans to publish the report, which was completed more than a year ago. However, yesterday a spokesman said a final draft was now being prepared and it would be published within a few weeks.

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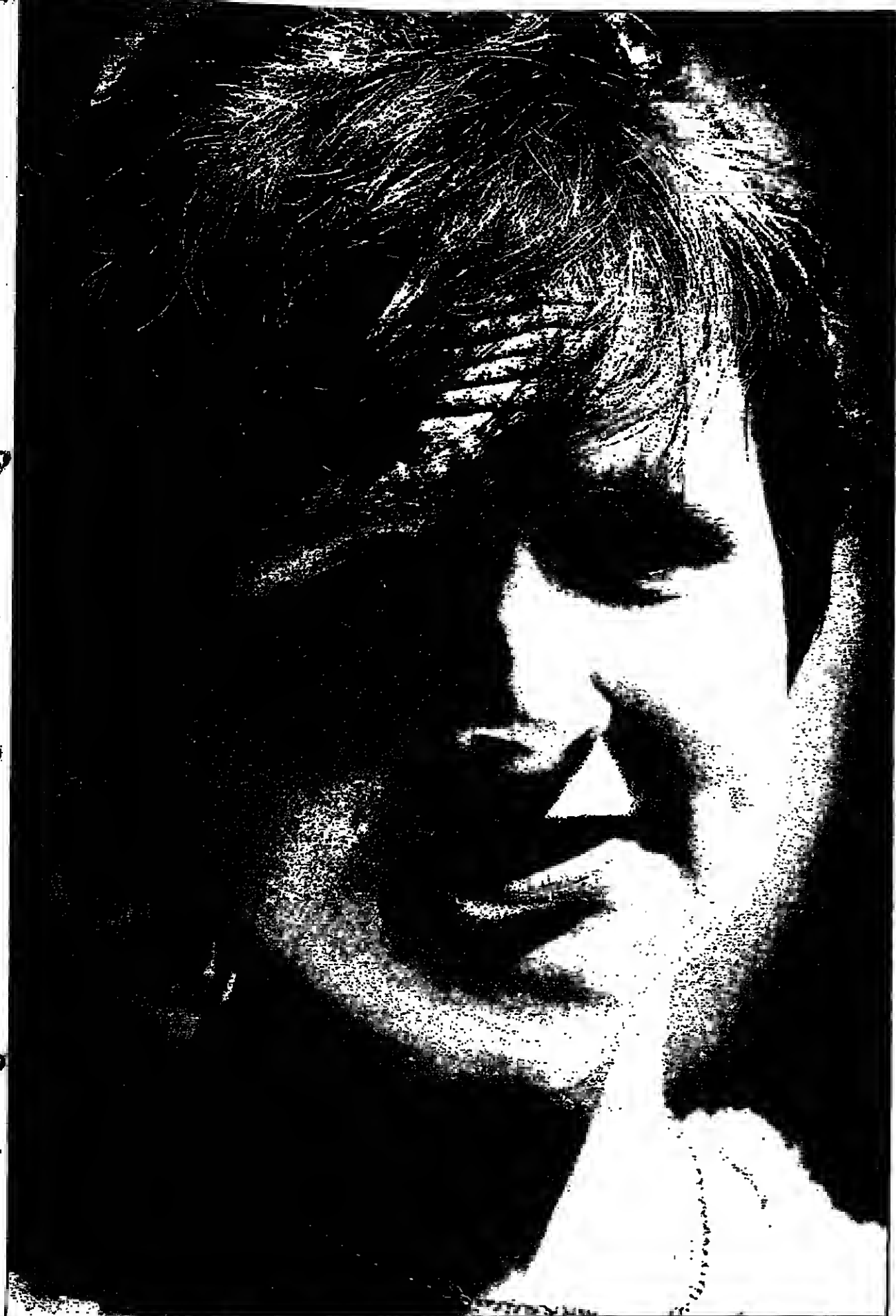
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KEN LIVINGSTONE
Gordon Brown's economic misjudgements
are the major factor threatening Labour's
second term of office
THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW PAGE 5

هكذا من الأصل

Woodward case: Trustees of defence fund vote to continue backing in face of lawyer's claims of fraud by mother



Louise supporters reject fraud claim

SUPPORTERS OF Louise Woodward, the British au pair convicted in Boston last year of killing the baby in her care, voted unanimously to continue backing her yesterday despite claims that her mother, Susan, had defrauded a trust fund set up for her defence.

Meeting in the village of Elton, home-base to the British support-Louise effort, trustees of the fund chose to discount the allegations. They were made on Monday by Daniel Sharp, the husband of Elaine Whitfield Sharp, who last week was sacked from the Woodward defence team.

Yesterday, Mr Sharp reiterated his charge that Susan Woodward forged an invoice last autumn to obtain \$15,400 (£9,500) from the fund. He alleges that while money was ostensibly drawn to repay him and his wife for housing Woodward and her family during the appeals process it was in fact pocketed by the family.

The invoice controversy is just the latest in a string of public relations set-backs for Woodward. After months out of the headlines, she has suddenly found herself the object of renewed scrutiny, because of what appears to have been a bitter falling out with the Sharps, whose home she left in early March.

Woodward, believed to be living now with friends in Boston, is all the while living in wrenching suspense. Her passport still confiscated, the 20-year-old awaits a decision from the seven-judge Supreme Judicial Court in Boston, which has been pondering her fate since an appeal hearing on 6 March.

Chairman of the Elton fund, the Rev Ken Davey, said yesterday: "The trustees of the appeal fund unanimously decided to continue supporting Louise Woodward and her parents. We always considered the Woodward parents to be honest and straightforward and that opinion has not changed." The statement did not answer the central point: whether the invoice was believed to be a fake or not and Mr Davey refused requests to clarify the matter. It was Mr Davey who released the invoice to the media in an attempt to prove that the Whitfield Sharps had charged Sue and Louise Woodward.

But Mr Sharp yesterday again suggested that Susan Woodward had "swiped some of our letterheads" to make the forged living-expenses invoice. Denying that he or his wife had any enmity against Woodward, Mr Sharp went on: "What that amounts to is that money that should have been used to defraud Louise Woodward was used by the Woodwards personally. I don't think that's what the little old ladies were giving their money for. We never gave them an invoice, they lived here for free, Susan lived here for free."

Mr Sharp accused the trustees of failing to answer the central question: "They don't deny the invoices are phoney, they don't deny that it is Susan Woodward's handwriting. My message to the trustees is simple, put up or shut up. They should get into the substance of the allegations."

Susan Woodward yesterday refused to make any comment apart from saying she endorsed everything said by Mr Davey, and her local MP Andrew Miller, who had spoken up in her support.

The split between Woodward and the Sharps became public two weeks ago after Ms Whitfield Sharp, who is British-born, was arrested outside Boston for drunken driving. The arresting officer said in his official report that she told him she was distraught because she had come to doubt Woodward's innocence in the death of 9-month-old Matthew Eappen. Days later, reports surfaced of comments made by Ms Whitfield Sharp over the phone to an anonymous friend, purportedly describing Woodward as a "duplicitous monster".

The other members of Woodward's defence team announced last week that Ms Whitfield Sharp was being removed from the case.

After being convicted last October of second-degree murder and sentenced to life, Woodward was subsequently released on time served by Judge Hiller Zobel who reduced the verdict to manslaughter. It is that decision the Superior Court is now weighing.

The Court's options include upholding Judge Zobel's ruling, ordering a resentencing or a retrial, or reinstating the original verdict and sentence. The ruling will probably be announced before 6 July.

Sue Woodward (above) and (top right) Louise with Elaine Whitfield Sharp - before they fell out Dan Chung

Court reforms aim to protect rape victims

SUSPECTED STALKERS will be banned from cross examining their alleged victim in most cases, under plans to reform the treatment of vulnerable or intimidated witnesses.

One-way mirrors which will allow alleged offenders, such as rapists and paedophiles, to see their victims in court are also expected to be recommended.

In a third reform, judges may be given powers to ban the publication of details of vulnerable witnesses which could lead to their identification.

The measures, which are due to be published today, are among a package of radical proposals to reform the way witnesses, particularly children, the disabled and victims of sexual assault, are dealt with by the criminal justice system.

The report also confirms changes announced by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to encourage more rape victims to give evidence. These include banning alleged rapists from cross examining their victims and not allowing a woman's sexual history to be read out in court except in exceptional circumstances.

The 78 recommendations contained in the review by the Interdepartmental Working Group will form the basis of changes to the law and court practice.

The report, *Speaking Up For Justice*, is expected to propose a major shake up of how witnesses are treated in future court cases. This follows concern that while the number of reported sex offences are increasing, the proportion of people being prosecuted is declining. This is thought to be linked to the traumatic experiences of some alleged victims who have faced hours of cross examination by their suspected attacker.

In an unexpected move, people accused of stalking - an increasingly common offence - will also face restrictions on who they can question. The report is expected to recommend giving judges new powers to ban cross examinations by the alleged offender.

On the question of shielding witnesses who may feel intimidated by their alleged assailant, the report is expected to propose allowing greater use of evidence given on video. The use of one way screens will also be suggested as a method of ensuring the defendant can see their accuser - considered an important legal principle - while screening the witness.

One of the more controversial proposals is expected to be giving courts new powers to restrict the publication of details that might identify witnesses considered vulnerable. This could outlaw almost all references to the background of a witness.

Other recommendations expected in today's report are:

- Re-locating the witness box in exceptional cases so that people in the public gallery cannot see the person being questioned.
- Providing pagers to some witnesses who will be allowed to wait outside the court building and be called only when needed to give evidence. This would prevent witnesses coming into unnecessary contact with the defendant or their supporters.
- Providing legal aid for any alleged rapist to pay for a barrister to cross examine the alleged victim.
- A pilot scheme allowing prisoners to appear in court on live television links from jails will begin in the autumn, the Home Office confirmed yesterday.
- Two prisons, Bristol and Strangeways in Manchester, will test the system, which will be extended across the country if it is a success.
- The TV links will cut the cost of transporting prisoners to and from court for routine remand and bail hearings, and reduce the risk of taking dangerous Category A inmates through city streets.

Screen challenge to Microsoft

A TINY American software company has come up with a way to push Bill Gates's omnipresent Microsoft off computer screens - by filling up the centimetre-deep black space below the screen with its own "control bar".

Pixel Corporation, based in Seattle, reckons that the tiny area could be the perfect wedge to break up Microsoft's growing control of what users see when they turn on a new PC.

Presently, Microsoft bars computer manufacturers from altering the "opening screen" of its Windows operating system, the standard on most PCs. The software giant can thus sell off its screen real-estate to the highest bidder, or to its own subsidiaries. But this leaves PC makers unable to distinguish their products. Those tactics led directly to the recent lawsuits filed against Microsoft by the US government and a number of states.

However, Pixel's attack is more subtle, and may in the end be more successful. Called MySpace, it consists of a bar that is inserted by software underneath the standard Windows95 control strip at the bottom of the screen.

It is squeezed in by using the black "overscan" space that surrounds every screen. MySpace reclaims that area, and pushes the Windows desktop slightly upwards to allow the user access to 34 applications, documents or Internet sites.

Companies wanting to gain visibility have been quick to recognise that this means they could get onto PC screens without dealing with Microsoft. Pixel already has deals signed with the Walt Disney Corporation, the online bookseller Amazon.com and others, all keen to provide content for the slots on its interface bar, which will be included on new PCs in the US this month from Packard Bell and NEC.

Tom O'Rourke, chief executive officer of Pixel, which was created in a spin-off from Packard Bell, said he came up with the idea of exploiting the unused space last year when he saw a televised sports event pushed up to make room for a scoreboard at the bottom of the screen. "It's a pretty simple idea, and most good ideas are simple," he said.

Ironically, the MySpace bar could bolster Microsoft's position that computer manufacturers have the flexibility to customise their machines and make independent deals with content providers and other software companies.

Mark Murray, a spokesman for Microsoft, said company executives had not yet seen the technology. However, he did not seem enthusiastic. "It sounds like much of what Pixel is doing duplicates capabilities that Microsoft already provides to the computer manufacturer and the consumer," he said.

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Coal mining: The Government has been embarrassed over its attempt to prevent further closures in the industry

MPs condemn plan to protect pits

GOVERNMENT PLANS to safeguard the coal industry by blocking further gas-fired power stations were attacked yesterday by a Labour-dominated committee of MPs.

In a hard-hitting report criticising the Government's lack of an energy policy, the Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee said there was no case for imposing a ban on grounds of either security or diversity of supply. It also called on ministers to plan for Britain's future energy requirements on the as-

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

sumption that there may be a need for further nuclear power stations over the next 20 years.

The timing of the report is an embarrassment for the Government, coming as it does as the President of the Board of Trade, Margaret Beckett, and the Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson, prepare to announce a rescue plan for the pits following a six-month energy review. The package is likely to involve a

continuation of the moratorium on planning consents for gas-fired stations and new agreements between the electricity generators and the coal industry to guarantee a market of about 25 tons of coal a year. Controversially, ministers are also considering blocking the construction of some gas stations which already have planning consent but which still require approval to burn gas.

The plans have already come under attack from power station developers for jeopardising job creation and yesterday the select committee added its voice, saying there was no danger of Britain becoming over-dependent on high-priced imported gas, as the Energy Minister John Birt has suggested.

"There are no reasons in terms of confidence in long-term availability to resist the growing use of gas," the report says. "Nor is the reluctant decrease in diversity over the next ten to fifteen years a dramatic one: UK energy supply would still be considerably more diverse than

it has been for most of this century."

The committee, chaired by the senior Labour backbencher Martin O'Neill, also criticised the way the Government let so much time pass last year without undertaking its energy review, creating uncertainty for the coal and offshore gas industries.

John Redwood, the Conservative spokesman on trade and industry, backed the MPs call for an end to the moratorium, adding: "The Trade and Industry Select Committee is right to slate the Gov-

ernment for its failure to deliver an energy policy, for its failure to open up energy markets and for the sidelining of the DTL."

The coal rescue package being prepared by ministers is designed to prevent about half the ten pit closures that would otherwise take place following the end of long-term contracts with the generators.

The committee said there was a "sustainable case" for a policy which safeguarded an indigenous deep-mined coal industry.

But in a surprise conclusion, it also suggested there was a role for nuclear power. Despite the unfavourable economic climate and the major effort that would be required to turn around public opinion, the question of new nuclear power stations "cannot and must not be ducked any longer," says the report. "We recommend that a formal presumption be made now for the purposes of long-term planning that new nuclear plant may be required in the course of the next two decades."

They belch smoke and steam, but Port Talbot loves its furnaces

BY PAUL VALLEY

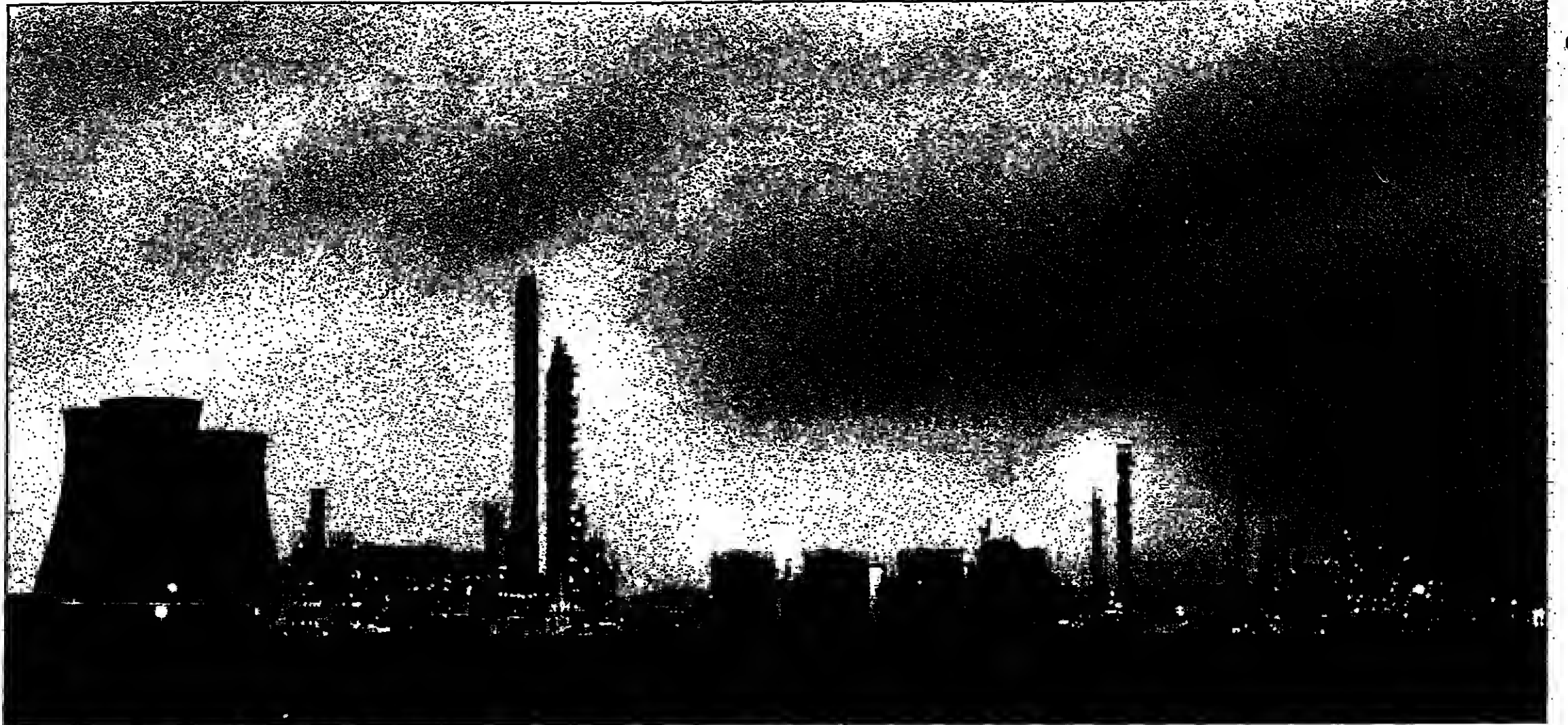
OUT of the mist and the rain a labyrinth of pipes appears. Massive cooling towers can be seen fleetingly through the swirling cloud. Chimneys belch great clouds of steam which mingle with the sea-fog and envelope the furnaces and distillation towers with their surreal spiral staircases.

Welcome to Port Talbot. Leaving behind what the PR hand-outs have told you is one of the most efficient steel-producing plants in Europe, you head for the windswept promenade where white waves crash, heavy laden with muddy sand, into the black rocks. Mercifully through the great fog, in the distance, white and orange lights seem to blink where the flare stacks rise from the serpentine coils of the British Petroleum plant at Baglan Bay.

This is, however, an outsider's view. The folk in the pubs and clubs of the little Welsh town tell a different story.

It is not simply about jobs and security, though it is true there is outrage at reports that the Government is to block the development of an energy park which promised 3,000 jobs on the largest single new site in the UK with room for a building of a million square feet - big enough for a car assembly plant.

No, it is about pride and about something else which has died in industrial life in modern Britain. Sitting in the Llandarcy Social Club, Mel Harris, a production technician at the chemical works, tells part of the story. "In this community there's virtually no-



The BP plant at Port Talbot, south Wales, where there is outrage at reports that government energy policy may lead to the company's job-creating proposals being blocked

John Voos

one who hasn't cause to be thankful to BP," he begins.

There is nothing of the obsequiousness of the employee about this. His drinking companions are a social worker, a police inspector and a civil servant. They all endorse his view.

The policeman talks approvingly about BP's road safety team, which tours local schools with a car adapted for use by children. The social worker speaks of her work as child safety co-ordinator on a BP-sponsored programme to revitalise the local Sandfields housing estate. The civil servant praises BP's Helping Hand which, among other things, buys football kits for new local clubs and even has its own bouncy castle which

it lends to local groups. If it sounds like good old-fashioned paternalism, that sense is only reinforced when Terry Harvey, the club manager, whose grandfather, mother and father, and son have all worked for the firm, recalls the good old days when, on wet Bonfire Nights, the company would send employees out with paraffin sheets to set the fires ablaze. "When I was a boy we used to say that everyone round here's got a BP stamp on their bum." All a thing of the past? Adrian Jenkins insists not. He is director of development at Neath Port Talbot Borough Council. "They have been very good industrial neighbours. They're not looked at as a multinational but as a local

firm. And it has continued when they started to downsize."

BP shut its crude oil refinery at Llandarcy in 1987. That used oil from the Middle East and the company found the plant was unable to compete with oil from the North Sea. It sparked off a domino effect in the manufacture of secondary oil products which has continued ever since.

The workforce on BP's two sites was more than halved. Around 1,000 jobs were lost by 1991. Another 300 went. Then in 1994 its Baglan Bay site lost a further 350, bringing the workforce down to the present 310.

"BP did not just walk away," says Adrian Jenkins. It spent £40m creating a business park where 70 new companies eventually grew, employing nearly

800 people in everything from laser technology to insurance broking. Then it set up a scheme to offer cheap unsecured loans for small businesses locally. When the last tranche of jobs went it helped its redundant staff to set up their own businesses - not one of which has since failed - and helped all but 10 of the others to find a new job.

"It's part of our corporate philosophy - to be a good neighbour," says BP's new business manager, Ken Allison. "Building a good reputation brings business. When we want to start work in a new area we can convince the local people of our bona fides by showing them how we behave elsewhere." The Llandarcy site is due for

complete closure next year and no new investment is planned at Baglan Bay, so it too may close within the next decade. BP's solution was to turn the adjacent land into an "energy park" where businesses would be attracted by electricity at a 30 per cent discount, provided by an updated gas-fired version of its site's power station. A commercial producer would build it with the inducement that surplus power could be sold to the national grid.

The Government seems unimpressed. "If we gave it the go-ahead there would be 15 others in the queue with similar proposals. We'd be sentencing coal to death," said one Whitehall insider. "More than that, if we continued the

Tory dash-for-gas policy, in five years we'd be 90 per cent dependent upon gas. And when North Sea oil runs out we'd be at the mercy of people like Turkey and Tajikistan."

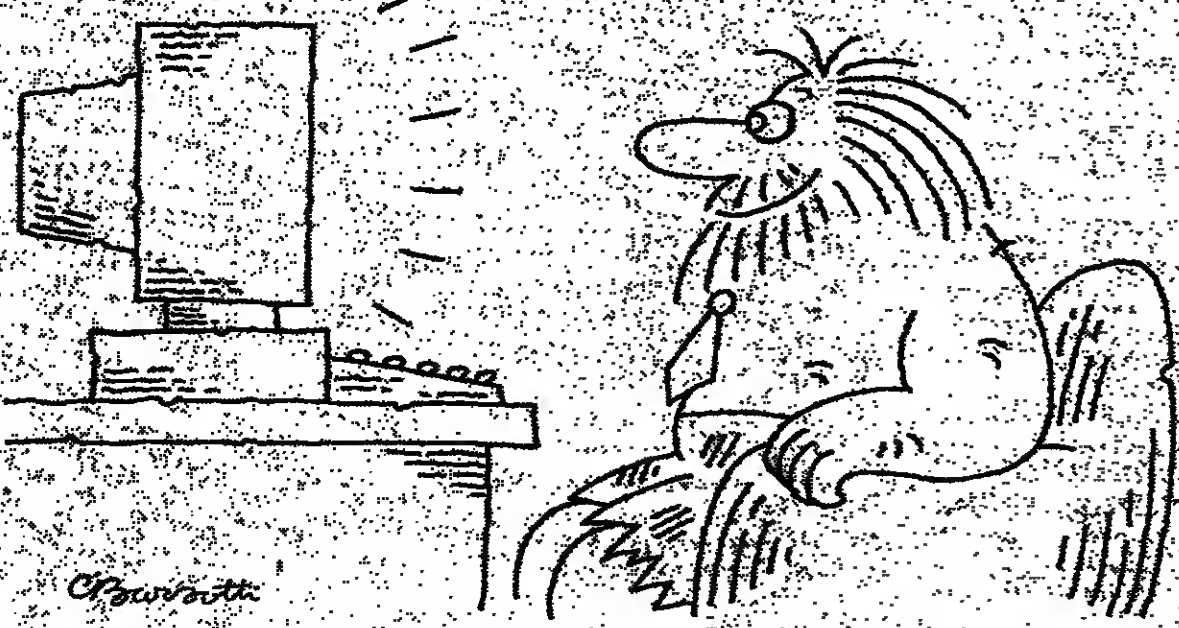
All of which puts the Welsh industry minister, Peter Hain, in a difficult position. Many of his constituents work at Baglan. But others have jobs in the rump of the mining industry. "I want to see the energy park go ahead," he says. "We have given them two options. Either they go for a smaller power station which mainly supplies the energy park and doesn't put so much into the national grid. Or they go for a clean coal power station."

They are unimpressed in Port Talbot. Ken Sawyers, chief

executive of the local authority, insists a coal-fired station is unacceptable. "The environmental impact would be too great." As to a smaller gas-fired plant, BP insists that it wouldn't produce power cheap enough to induce firms to move. "If the Government won't back our proposal," says Ken Allison, "then they need to think about some other inducement - enterprise zone status or full development area status."

One thing is sure, says Vernon Griffiths, 75, who worked for BP for 39 years, as he rises to leave the club: "We're the relics of the good days. You don't get jobs for life nowadays in any industry. You won't see another firm like them round here again."

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No damages for N-bomb 'guinea pigs'

By JOHN DAVISON

A FIGHT for compensation by British nuclear test veterans ground to halt yesterday when the European Court of Human Rights threw out their latest legal challenge.

A split decision by nine European judges to reject two test-case actions means the campaign has nowhere obvious left to go. Some veterans say this is effectively the end, while others vow to fight on.

The two men involved in the action have consistently claimed that their lives were ruined by being forced to witness nuclear tests at Christmas Island in the Pacific in 1957, and that they were used as human guinea pigs. They had been hoping for compensation of up to £100,000 each.

Edward Egan, 59, from Glasgow and Ken McGinley, from Paisley, were granted leave to take the Ministry of Defence to the Strasbourg court last year, claiming that the government had covered up vital documents which could have won them earlier compensation or a war pension. The veterans' full case has never been tested in the British courts, largely because of a lack of available evidence.

Yesterday Mr Egan said he was "bitterly disappointed" by the decision, adding that it

would probably mark the end of his 38-year fight for recognition of his suffering. "It is not only the end of the road for me, it is the end of the road for the thousands of other people who were hoping that this would set a precedent," he said, speaking from home. He was too ill to travel to Strasbourg for yesterday's court hearing.

"If there was another place to take the case I would take it on further, but I don't think there is anywhere to go after this," he said. "It's the widows and the children I feel really sorry for."

Mr Egan and Mr McGinley were among about 22,000 British servicemen and 1,000 civilians who witnessed nuclear explosions in the South Pacific and Australia. At Christmas Island, where a total of six bombs were detonated, they say the servicemen were ordered to line up in the open, with no protection against the blast, which was only about 20 miles away.

"I was in hospital at the time, and they brought me out and told me to sit on the deck of the ship. I had no warning. I was just told I was going on an expedition and I would never see anything else like it in my life," said Mr Egan, who was then an 18-year-old naval rating.

"That was certainly true. I've never seen anything like it, and I wouldn't wish it on anyone

else. I remember seeing the blast every day, you couldn't forget it."

He said that exposure to the radiation had caused him a multitude of health problems, ranging from osteoporosis in his hips and back, the loss of a lung, and a heart attack he suffered when aged only 42. "The most tragic thing is that it goes right through my family. My daughter and granddaughter have been affected as well," said Mr Egan.

Mr McGinley, who was in Strasbourg yesterday, says the radiation from the tests left him sterile, and caused him arthritis, skin and kidney problems. He is chairman of the British Nuclear Test Veterans' Association, which was set up in 1983 to fight for compensation. The group alleges that witnesses were deliberately exposed to radiation to see how their bodies would react.

Peter Fletcher, vice-chairman of the association and a veteran of the very first test in 1952, admitted yesterday that they must now go "back to the drawing board". But he added: "I for one certainly won't give up."

Announcing yesterday's result, Judge Rudolf Bernhardt said that it had not been shown that any documents existed which could have proved the men's case, while stressing that the court had no jurisdiction



Ken McGinley says radiation from Britain's nuclear tests in the 1950s left him sterile and caused him arthritis, skin and kidney problems

to consider allegations of lack of protection offered to the men during the tests. Four out of the nine judges sitting at the case, however, dissented from its findings. No reasons were given.

John Speller, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Defence, welcomed the ruling. "The documents which we have provided both before and during

the court case clearly demonstrate that the great majority of servicemen present at the tests were in a safe position - too far from the nuclear detonations to receive any measurable radiation dose," he said.

Mr Egan, however, remains uncompromising. "I have this sickness, the government don't, and so they are not bothered," he said.

Clampdown on farm worker exploitation

By LINUS GREGORIADIS

A CLAMPDOWN on the illegal exploitation of farm workers by unscrupulous "gangmasters" was announced by the Government yesterday.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food unveiled measures which could save taxpayers millions of pounds by curbing the unlawful employment of immigrants and benefit claimants.

"Operation Gangmaster" is designed to stop agricultural foremen or "gangmasters" paying immigrants low wages to work on farms under appalling conditions.

Lord Donoughue, the farming industry minister, said yesterday: "There is a significant minority of gangmasters in this country whose activities are simply unacceptable. I am very concerned about the intimidation

and abuse of workers' rights which some of these people are involved in."

Although the majority of gangmasters provide a legitimate service, meeting farmers' demands for manpower during the busiest times of year, about 20 per cent of the 2,000 gangmasters in this country operate illegally, he said.

He added: "Operation Gangmaster will involve joint enforcement visits to farms where illegal activities are suspected. These will be followed by in-depth investigations into the gangmasters involved."

The Government believes that new guidelines for gangmasters, farmers and workers, produced by the National Farmers' Union and the Fresh Produce Consortium, will reduce the scale of the problem by informing them of their rights and obligations.

Illegal immigrants, many of whom are smuggled into Britain from eastern Europe, have been found to have worked for as little as £1 an hour at harvest time. Gangmasters are able to exploit their workers' poor grasp of English and their illegal status.

Leaflets explaining workers' rights - including 10,000 in Polish and Russian - will be distributed among workers who are often intimidated into not complaining about long working hours and deductions from their pay for transport or accommodation.

The Transport and General Workers' Union, which believes that 10 to 15 per cent of an estimated 40,000 gangworkers in this country are illegal workers from abroad, welcomed the Government's initiative.

Don Pollard, the national chair of the union's agricultural

section, said: "They have co-ordinated the enforcement of existing law and we support this as a useful first step."

But he said that the TGWU would also like to see registration of gangmasters.

Lord Donoughue said: "For the longer term we are continuing to examine the scope for registration of agricultural gangmasters and ways to assist the unemployed to take up seasonal agricultural employment more easily, reducing the temptation to work while on benefit and laying individuals open to exploitation by gangmasters."

The first raid in the Government's operation last April led to 180 workers being interviewed on spring onion farms in Lincolnshire.

Fifty of the workers were found to be benefit claimants and 37 were arrested for possible immigration offences.

Degree standards proposal 'points to disaster'

By BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

OXFORD academics yesterday condemned a potentially disastrous plan to impose national standards on universities.

They said proposals from the new higher education standards watchdog were expensive, unnecessary and at best irrelevant.

The Quality Assurance Agency, however, said its proposals had been backed by students and business leaders.

A consultative document produced by the agency proposes laying down "programme specifications" to show what degrees should cover and setting up a system of registered examiners to inspect university teaching.

The Independent revealed last month that the agency had been forced to back down over inspections after protests from vice-chancellors and lecturers.

Responses from Oxford and Cambridge focus on proposals to set degree standards, which have been criticised as the first step towards a national curriculum for higher education.

Oxford University said it would "strongly oppose" the idea of national specifications for degrees.

The university's response to the consultation said: "We think it highly important to recognise that learning is a two-way process, not simply delivery of a curriculum." Academics said the system "would be highly expensive and without benefit in this or similar institutions".

Cambridge said: "It would be nothing short of disastrous if the system proposed... were to have the effect of crippling those institutions whose expectation is excellence and whose performance is outstanding. There is a serious risk that the present proposals would do just this."

John Randall, chief executive of the Quality Assurance Agency, said that proposals would be developed in the light of the 300 responses to the consultation.

"There are proper concerns that a new system should be effective, not bureaucracy," he said. "It should build on what has been achieved by institutions and avoid duplication of effort. It must recognise the diversity that gives higher education its strength."

Anaesthetist's 'fatal errors'

A 10-YEAR-OLD girl died in the dentist's chair after an anaesthetist failed to follow basic procedures, a disciplinary hearing was told yesterday.

Katie Dougal had been having two front teeth in a fall. But within minutes of being put under a general anaesthetic by consultant Dr Tapas Kumar Basu, she suffered heart failure.

The General Medical Council in London was told that Dr Basu, 59, had failed to use monitoring equipment to check the child's heart and blood gases during the operation.

Rosalind Foster, for the Council, told the Professional Conduct Committee hearing that it was alleged that Dr Basu had also failed to check Katie's blood pressure, weigh her or to take an adequate medical history.

Dr Basu, of Walsall, denies serious professional misconduct in failing to provide adequate medical care, failing to keep his anaesthetics knowledge up to date and failure to keep adequate records. He is also accused of failing to initiate proper resuscitation or use a defibrillator to try to start her heart.

Katie's mother, Patricia Dougal, 51, of Breacra, Derbyshire,



Katie Dougal, 10, who died in dentist's chair

said she brought her daughter to the Alexander T Gordon practice in Long Eaton on 18 January 1996 after her GP had said she was fit for the anaesthetic.

Katie was found to be dead on arrival at the Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham.

Dr Basu, who has been working as a consultant at the Neath General Hospital in West Glamorgan, admitted not being familiar with guidance given to anaesthetists by the company employing him at the surgery and failing to connect monitors. He denies the other charges.

The hearing continues.

Protest drivers facing court

By RANDEEP RAMESH
Transport Correspondent

FOURTEEN LORRY drivers face prosecution by police over a protest action earlier this week that reduced thousands of cars to a crawl on Britain's motorways.

Essex police said that 60 lorries draped in banners drove at 5mph on some stretches of motorway, causing traffic jams up to eight miles long. Officers identified 14 trucks that police say were driving "without due care and consideration for other road users".

Acting Inspector Mick Green, from Brentwood Traffic Unit, said that the action was "totally disruptive", and the vehicles were a potential danger to other drivers.

The disruption was part of a nationwide protest by a newly formed action group that is campaigning against both the high cost of diesel in Britain and law changes that will allow European drivers to work in this country without permits.

Two of England's biggest cities were targeted - London and Birmingham. In the Midlands, more than a hundred lorries blocked two of the three M6 lanes between Staffordshire and Warwickshire.

However, the leader of the truckers said that the group would fight on, claiming that the police had intimidated them.

"We won't be put off by these bully-boy tactics," said Peter Knight, a Kent haulier who leads the protest group Trans-Action.

Mr Knight said more action was planned, and he added that his group would resort to "French-style" blockades to get noticed. "Nobody listens to what we say. The extra duty on diesel will lose me alone £32,000 this year."

"If the lads get taken to court, the police will have to stop 1,000 tractors and cabs from turning up," added Mr Knight, whose protest group has 50 members.

The group fears that the lower cost of diesel on the Continent - as much as 15p cheaper than the 53p a litre paid for the fuel in Britain - coupled with the lifting of work restrictions on foreign hauliers, will see Continental firms flooding onto the nation's highways.

Trade organisations were sympathetic to the hauliers' arguments but not the methods employed. "This action will not get Government listening," said Steve Norris, the head of the Road Haulage Association.

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	£50,000+	5.50	4.40	-	-
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	£10,000+	7.05	5.64	6.80	5.44
	£50,000+	7.45	5.92	7.20	5.72
Bonus 120 Account (Including Bonus)*	£50,000+	7.25	5.80	7.00	5.60
	£100,000+	7.55	6.04	7.30	5.84
	£50,000+	7.75	6.20	7.50	6.00
	£100,000+	7.85	6.28	7.60	6.08
Mutual Bond	£50+	6.75	5.40	-	-
	£50,000+	7.50	6.00	-	-
	£10,000+	7.60	6.08	-	-
	£10,000+	7.75	6.20	-	-
Monthly Saver (Premium Rate)*	£50+	4.80	3.84	-	-
	£50,000+	5.05	4.04	-	-
	£10,000+	5.40	4.32	-	-
	£50,000+	5.55	4.44	-	-
One Month Notice*	£50+	4.30	3.44	4.25	3.40
	£50,000+	4.50	3.60	4.40	3.52
	£10,000+	4.80	3.84	4.65	3.72
	£50,000+	5.10	4.08	4.95	3.96
Special Asset	£50,000+	5.55	4.44	5.35	4.28
	£25,000+	5.20	4.16	5.10	4.08
	£10,000+	5.60	4.48	5.50	4.40
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Anger as jury clear PC in CS gas attack

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

A JURY that cleared a 6ft 2in traffic policeman of assault after he squirted CS spray into the face of a pensioner who had parked on double yellow lines was yesterday rebuked by the judge presiding over the case.

PC Andrew Taylor, 31, had denied causing actual bodily harm and said he used the spray because Kenneth Whitaker, 67, was uncooperative, abusive and threatening.

He was cleared by a jury of eight women and four men at Luton Crown Court after four and a half hours. But Judge Daniel Rodwell said: "Notwithstanding the verdict, this has been a disturbing and upsetting case. I fear that the reaction in the Civil Court will be quite different and will cost Bedfordshire Police Authority quite a lot of money."

He refused to award PC Taylor his costs and told the jury: "I think you will perhaps reflect that if in future other OAPs are gassed or assaulted by police they may indeed have this particular case in mind."

"It would be totally wrong to fund this defendant's cost out of public money."

Mr Whitaker's two sons, Vince and Kelvin, and his daughter Jennifer who were in court, said they were shocked by the verdict.

"He was a 65-year-old man sitting in a car with a seatbelt on who was sprayed because a policeman was scared. I have no faith in the justice system any more," said Ms Whitaker.

Vince Whitaker said: "We were certain it would be guilty. It is unbelievable. I would imagine my father will be seeking further legal advice to see if there is anything else that can be done in the Civil Court."

Mr Whitaker, who was not in court to hear the verdict, said later: "I am just disgusted by it. Nobody is a winner here."

It emerged after the hearing that Mr Whitaker had already been paid thousands of pounds in compensation by Bedfordshire police in an out-of-court settlement after he took civil action against them.

"I would like it to be known that this case was heard last August and I was awarded costs plus an out-of-court settlement which, of course, completely vindicated me," he said.

PC Taylor was driven away from court in an unmarked car by a uniformed traffic policeman after leaving the court with his wife Rebecca, who is also a police officer, and their five-month-old son Daniel.

Outside the court there were angry exchanges between members of Mr Whitaker's family and friends and relatives of PC Taylor.

A spokesman for Bedfordshire police said PC Taylor, who has been suspended pending the outcome of the court hearing, would be reinstated to the force.

The spokesman said Bedfordshire police would "look again" at their CS spray procedures. But he stressed that officers acted within legal guidelines laid down nationally when using their sprays.

"It is essential that police... have the confidence to use the equipment they are supplied with," he said.

"Bedfordshire police use their incapacity in line with the national training and within the national guidelines. However, we will look at them again as a matter of course."

He said PC Taylor would not face any internal police disciplinary procedures.



'Portrait of Lady Williams Wynn with her three children', by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which sold for a record £1,376,500 at Sotheby's in London last night. Andrew Bauman

No place like home in tomorrow's world

HOME IS where the heart is for the Britons of 2020 with our whole idea of community, work and relationships altered and made more flexible.

With one in five of us self-employed in 20 years' time and less than half of us in full-time work, the home will become increasingly important as a place where we not only live but work, shop and seek entertainment.

The NeXt generation: *Lifestyles for the Future*, a report by the Henley Centre, says the watchwords for the next decades are flexibility, choice, self-sufficiency and disenfranchisement as society develops.

Those born after 1978 - the so-called "Millennial Kids" - will also be well-adapted to prosper, already accepting the need for self-sufficiency and planning for their future.

The losers will be men - who have seen traditional jobs erode - and the "have-nots" who will see the support of the welfare state reduced.

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

The winners in 2020 will undoubtedly be women who are seen as better suited to flexible employment and have shown more skills in areas like teamwork and time management, all of which will be at a premium in the new workforce.

Those born after 1978 - the so-called "Millennial Kids" - will also be well-adapted to prosper, already accepting the need for self-sufficiency and planning for their future.

The losers will be men - who have seen traditional jobs erode - and the "have-nots" who will see the support of the welfare state reduced.

The Henley Centre, which compiled the research for the Prudential predicts that diminishing family ties mean we will become more reliant on friends, seeking out like-minded people rather than relatives, and that the home will become the centre of our lives.

"The home is of increasing importance," said Laurie Taylor, visiting professor of politics and sociology at Birkbeck College, London. "There is a great increase in home ownership, and important technical advances mean that more and more can be done from the home including work ... Al-

ready 15 per cent of package holidays are booked through Coefax and when television becomes interactive there will be an enormous transformation ... We have to ask what the future of the community will be."

With more flexible attitudes to families, and a state pension likely to be worth only 8 per cent of average earnings by 2020, a whole new attitude to financial planning will have to be worked out. Self-sufficiency will become more important in managing money. And people will have to retire later or maybe not at all to maintain a modest income during their twilight years.

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Man held in abuse inquiry at Barnardo's

BY GLENDA COOPER

POLICE IN Yorkshire are appealing for former residents and staff at a Barnardo's children's home to come forward after a man was arrested in connection with alleged sexual abuse.

A 51-year-old man, of Worcester, was arrested last Monday night in the West Midlands and taken to Harrogate police station, North Yorkshire, where he was being questioned.

The man, who was a houseparent at Springhill residential school, in Ripon, North Yorkshire, was being interviewed by police who were investigating a series of allegations of physical and sexual abuse at the school in the Sixties and Seventies.

The inquiry is the latest in a series of scandals where former residents of children's homes around the country have made

extensive allegations of abuse, particularly in North Wales and Cheshire, where Britain's biggest investigation into the abuse of children in care was launched four years ago.

The Yorkshire investigation began last September after a former resident at the school, which looked after children with learning difficulties and challenging behaviour, made a complaint to the charity Barnardo's which was passed on to the police.

Police have now spoken to 60 former residents of the school, which was responsible for boys and girls between the ages of five and sixteen, and 10 complaints of abuse have been made against former members of staff. These allegations are being investigated.

"Since receiving the initial complaint we have spoken to a number of former residents, some of whom have made allegations of physical and sexual abuse," said Detective Inspector Phil Metcalfe, who is leading the inquiry. "We are continuing our inquiries and it is vital we hear from people who lived at the Springhill school in order to substantiate these allegations."

Twelve officers and two social workers from North Yorkshire County Council have been drafted in to help with the inquiry, codenamed Operation Pudsey.

During the Sixties and Seventies, the Barnardo's Springhill School was based in an old Church Commission building called the Bishop's Palace. It included 82 acres of land, and had a chapel, a coach house and a gate lodge.

Between 1940, when the school was established, and 1949, it was an all-girls school, but in 1950 it became mixed and was known as a school for the "educationally subnormal". In 1989 £2m was invested in constructing four new buildings for the school. There were on average 40 children cared for by the school each year, although this went up to 56 in 1979 to 1980.

A spokeswoman for the police said that she was not aware of any previous investigation into Springhill. None of the current staff is under suspicion.

A spokesman for Barnardo's said that the allegations related to the period between 1967 and 1974: "We are saddened and distressed by any claims relating to the protection of children entrusted to our care and there is full co-operation with the police."

"This matter was brought to our attention in 1997, we immediately investigated and passed the matter over to the police," he added. "Clearly we have no wish to prejudice police inquiries so we cannot comment further at this point."

Social workers spurn forum

BY ROGER DOBSON

MORE THAN 100 homes and schools in Cheshire and Merseyside have been or are now being investigated amid allegations that children in care have been abused.

For the past two years, police forces throughout the United Kingdom have also been investigating allegations of abuse based on information passed to them from the North-west.

Against this background social services in the North-west organised - with police backing - what was to have been a national conference for the country's top social services managers to pass on tips that had been picked up during the four-year inquiry.

Despite this a national conference on combating child abuse had to be cancelled because not enough senior social workers would be attending.

Delegates were to have been given expert advice on how to protect children and track down abusers based on lessons learnt during Britain's biggest investigation into the abuse of children in care.

"I was very disappointed," said Vic Citarella, director of social services in Liverpool. "By the deadline we had set we had only 37 applications, and that included quite a lot of local

people, which was not enough to make it worthwhile ...

"We felt it was the sort of experience departments could apply and we had the support of the Social Services Inspectorate. I don't know why people didn't want to come ..."

Co-organiser, David Whitehead, director in Warrington, said: "I was surprised and rather disappointed that we had to cancel it."

"We were not advocating a particular way of doing things."

We were not saying our way was the best, we were trying to put together an opportunity for people to exchange experiences, ideas and problems."

Mr Whitehead added: "There needs to be some informed and national debate on what is clearly becoming a widespread national problem."

Alan Levy QC, writing in *Whistleblowing in the Social Services*, published yesterday, said: "We already have many suggestions and recommendations from exhaustive inquiries. Why have these not been put into practice? Why are the same mistakes being made? Why is a great deal of avoidable suffering and damage still occurring?"

"It must be a high priority to ensure that the will is found to put the detailed lessons into practice."

ANNE MCELVOY
The British write a fierce letter -
brimstone is our natural mode. But we
remain too craven towards talk show hosts
THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW, PAGE 4

كلنا من الأصل

Wife's plea to missing father as son is born



Jane Noble, wife of the missing doctor Matthew Choyce, introducing their son Iain Matthew yesterday

John Giles/PA

THE WIFE of a doctor who disappeared without trace more than eight months ago has given birth to his son, it was announced yesterday.

Dr Jane Noble, 30, gave birth to a 10lb 12oz boy on Monday night - and hopes that news of the birth will reach her missing husband, Dr Matthew Choyce, and persuade him to return to their home in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Dr Noble's twin sister, Ann, a cancer research doctor, helped with the delivery, and their mother, Dr Mary Noble, 68, a social anthropology researcher, was also on hand.

The baby has been named Iain Matthew after Dr Noble's father and husband, said the proud mother, adding: "It would have been nice to have had Matthew here with me at the birth. I'm sure he would have loved to have been here."

Dr Noble, who became pregnant four weeks before her husband disappeared, said: "The most important thing is for Matthew to come back. He won't be in any trouble. Everyone - friends, family and colleagues - just wants to know



Matthew Choyce: Vanished from his home last October

"If anyone sees Matthew I would like them to tell him that his wife and child love him, and I miss him deeply."

Dr Choyce, 34, an Old Etonian and Oxford graduate, disappeared from his home in Heaton without warning some time between 4am and 7.17am on 6 October. He was believed to be under stress over his career as a casualty doctor at Sunderland Royal Hospital, Wearside, and was considering making his next step to become a consultant.

His grey Renault Clio, now at the family home, was found on the seafloor at Tynemouth. Inside was a note which, while rambling, gave no suggestion that he might be about to kill himself. His bank account has not been touched, and he also left behind his credit card, passport and driving licence.

Dr Noble continued working on her PhD at Newcastle University after her husband disappeared, and has now taken six months' maternity leave.

Dr Choyce knew about his wife's pregnancy a week before he disappeared, and was keen to start a family.

Call for nicotine patches on NHS

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

A GROUP of MPs and experts yesterday called for nicotine patches and gum to be made available on prescription to help smokers quit, and thus reduce the financial burden on the National Health Service.

Smoking costs the NHS £1.7bn a year and is a principal contributor to inequalities in health, with the highest levels of smoking occurring among the most disadvantaged members of society, who also have greatest difficulty in giving up.

The group, led by the Labour MP Dr Ian Gibson, who is chairman of the all-party cancer group, said that the expense of nicotine replacement therapy - from £120 to more than £200 for a three-month supply - could put some smokers off making the attempt to give up.

Godfrey Fowler, Emeritus Professor of General Practice at Oxford University and the chairman of an expert panel convened by Novartis, a manufacturer of the nicotine products, said: "With the prevalence of smoking increasing after 20 years of decline it is clear that positive action must be taken to get ahead in the war against smoking and tobacco. We are asking the Government, those responsible for public policy, healthcare professionals and smokers alike to recognise that nicotine replacement therapy is not only safe but is also the most effective aid to smoking cessation currently available."

Trials have shown that the use of nicotine patches and

gum increases success rates among smokers attempting to give up the habit from around 3 per cent to 6 per cent.

A report produced by the panel, which includes Professor John Moxham, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at King's College, London, and Dr Martin Jarvis, a researcher on smoking at University College London, says tobacco addiction should be taken as seriously as alcohol or drug addiction and efforts should be made to increase awareness of the benefits of using nicotine therapy.

Dr Jarvis said: "Over 4,000 harmful products have been identified in cigarette smoke and within these it is the tars that contain the major carcinogens. There is no evidence that nicotine is carcinogenic."

Kevin Barron, the chairman of the Labour backbench health committee and of the all-party parliamentary smoking and health group, said: "The NHS should run some pilot programmes, using either health improvement programmes or health action zones, to measure, through independent evaluation, the health and cost benefit of such strategies."

The launch of the report at the House of Commons drew protests from the Tory MP Gerald Howarth, who said it was wrong for a commercial company to use the facilities of the Commons to promote its products under the guise of addressing a matter of public policy. His intervention was later denounced by Dr Gibson, who said it was "outrageous ... and 100 per cent false".

Inquiry into TV 'Castro fraud'

BY JANINE GIBSON
Media Correspondent

CARLTON TELEVISION faces a second inquiry by the Government's television watchdog over more accusations of faking documentaries.

The ITV company, which is already under investigation by the Independent Television Commission over its expose of Colombian drugs smuggling, *The Connection*, will now have to defend a 1994 film, *Inside Castro's Cuba*. The same team - producer/director Marc de Beaufort and executive producer, Roger James - worked on both documentaries.

The Network First documentary, broadcast on ITV to two million viewers, is accused of portraying archive footage of Cuban president Fidel Castro as a specially conducted interview with Mr de Beaufort.

An ITC spokesman confirmed yesterday that the government watchdog has requested a tape of *Inside Castro's Cuba* from Carlton Television. If the ITC rules that Carlton has breached its code in either this case or over *The Connection*, the company faces penalties ranging from a fine to having its licence removed.

The key question for the ITC is if the "interview" is claimed as such within the programme. Carlton maintains the programme does not make the claim. Sources say claims were only made in publicity.

If Carlton's claims are vindicated by the ITC, then the ITV Network Centre may still have grounds for complaint as Stuart Prebble, then head of factual programming, says he commissioned Carlton on the pledge of an interview with Castro.

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Tony's chief bully boxes clever with smile and velvet gloves

JOHN PRESCOTT, the chief bully and Deputy Prime Minister, took the House of Commons stage yesterday for Environment, Transport and the Region's questions to face Gillian Shephard, his new shadow. Over the years, Mr Prescott has raised the art of bullying to a human bloodsport. Prime Ministers' ministers, trade union leaders, Peter Mandelson, the former MP for Cleethorpes and, finally, the English language, have all at some time or another submitted, defeated, to his gruff no-nonsense approach. This is the first time I have seen him since he concluded his successful tour of the country (which began and ended in

Cleethorpes) during the last general election. And what a difference a year makes! Gone were the massive chips on both shoulders. Instead, was a well-padded, well-fitting suit. Almost elegant, he looked every inch the senior political heavyweight in total control of his department. Where once was a permanent scowl there is now an occasional smile. Mr Prescott is obviously enjoying ministerial life and just turned 60 last week, knows that he has confounded the pundits and his foes by dropping few catches. The fiery temper which was once his Achilles Heel has been kept well out of public view.

Yet his demeanour still bears the proud hallmarks of the class warrior even if, on his own admission, he has been admitted by middle England to its high table of comfortable homes, fancy restaurants and Jaguar cars. Mrs Shephard preferred to leave the school bully alone and upbraided, instead, the swot, Hilary Armstrong, local government minister, on possible threats to switch money from shire counties to urban areas. Mrs Shephard is as diminutive as Mr Prescott is heavy. Where his words tumble out in no particular order, hers are issued individually rather as though they have been

THE SKETCH



MICHAEL BROWN

specially selected and counted out for the occasion. One can imagine Mrs Shephard as

the school ma'am (she was once a school inspector) coping with Prescott as the class bully with his flicking of ink pellets and his verbal cheek. "I may be facing the blackboard, Prescott, but I know you are the one I can hear putting chip butties into my handbag. See me afterwards." It is rumoured that when they both appeared together last week after William Hague's reshuffle, Mr Prescott said to Mrs Shephard as they were standing behind the Speaker's chair: "I don't know whether I kiss you or cuddle you." "You'll do neither," she reportedly replied. But there are some differences to

Mr Prescott's new approach compared with his old style. Where once he set about his politics with a fiery passion, he now wisely uses cooling water to damp down potential trouble from the opposition benches. He generously, and almost courteously, welcomed the new junior opposition spokesman, Bernard Jenkin, who showed great wit and further promise on his first outing. Mr Prescott apologised for not participating in yesterday's parliamentary cycle ride to mark National Bike Week, but said he had just flown in from New York. "I don't think anybody has thought of cycling from New York."

Mr Jenkin said to laughter that this would no doubt become a Liberal Democratic Party policy, shortly before he took on the old bruiser on the delay in producing the much heralded transport White Paper. Mr Prescott cuffed gently by saying he had to spend the past year sorting out the mess the Tories left him. This question time showed the full extent of Mr Prescott's personal achievement. With old scores to settle, I tried in vain to see any cracks in his armoury. I want to hate him but I just cannot. He is simply too good. But then maybe I have always been prejudiced, subconsciously in his favour. After all, my secondary modern schoolboys must stick together, mustn't we John?

Prescott vows to confront rebels

JOHN PRESCOTT has made an offer to Tony Blair to use his role as Deputy Leader of the Labour Party to tackle the growing unrest in the party at Westminster.

Downing Street yesterday shrugged off the revolt by 31 Labour MPs against the introduction of student tuition fees and the abolition of maintenance grants.

But the Deputy Prime Minister sounded a note of concern in his exclusive interview with *The Independent* about the party. He believes Labour spokesmen have succeeded in making the step from Opposition shadows to ministers in charge of Whitehall departments, but the party has yet to get right the shift from Opposition to Government.

"I think that has yet to be sorted out and it is the very area where the interface between the party in Opposition, and the party in Government is most felt. I don't think we have got that any where near right as it should be."

"There are changes in the general secretary and the rules. That is an area I am a little nervous about. I don't think

LABOUR PARTY
BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

we have got the framework near right yet," said Mr Prescott.

"I'm saying it's an interface between Opposition and Government."

"We have all had to go through it, from MPs to party staff. I think that is a process which we haven't examined enough and yet the manifestations of those sensitivities are all around us."

"The relations with the PLP and with the party. I think in the coming year as Deputy Leader I will need to live up to what I think the Deputy Leader's job is."

He had his 60th birthday last week and he says that in the last ten years of his political life, he has no intention of fighting frustrating battles over whether he should be the one to sort out relations between the party and the Government.

The Deputy Prime Minister confirmed he would be voting for Dennis Skinner against a whip's slate of three candidates in the elections to the party's national executive.

That will be seen by the MPs as a signal to ignore the whips' pressure in the secret ballot, but his weekend message was clear: if the Prime Minister wants him to do so, he is ready to increase his workload over the next year to quell some of the unrest.

Last night, the revolt over student grants and tuition fees ended with the third reading of the Teaching and Higher Education Bill, but the discontent rumbled on with Labour backbenchers complaining the gullotine had limited their scope to air their grievances.



Problem solver John Prescott



Ten French MPs joined over 100 MPs and Lords who took part in the annual great Parliamentary bike ride as part of National Bike Week. Pictured above is Michael Meacher MP.

Inquiry warning to top civil servant

ROBIN COOK'S most senior civil servant was heavily criticised by MPs yesterday as he repeatedly refused to answer questions about the arms to Sierra Leone affair.

Sir John Kerr, who was recalled to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee after being forced to retract evidence given at an earlier hearing, said he could say little until an inquiry was complete.

The permanent secretary to the Foreign Office did confirm, however, that two Foreign Office ministers were given different information about the involvement of a firm of British mercenaries in a counter-coup.

SIERRA LEONE

BY FRANK ABRAMS
Political Correspondent

Baroness Symons and Tony Lloyd answered parliamentary questions on consecutive days in March, but while Mr Lloyd was not told there was a Customs and Excise inquiry into the activities of Sandline International, Baroness Symons was.

Sir John Stanley, Conservative MP for Tonbridge and Malling, said the committee had taken advice from the clerk of the House of Commons and that Sir John Kerr would be in contempt if he failed to answer questions. But the official told the committee several times that he could not help them because of an ongoing inquiry by Sir Thomas Legg into whether officials or ministers knew about Sandline's activities. The firm was paid by the exiled Sierra Leonean President, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, to help reinstate him last March.

Sir John Kerr said that to give new information might prejudice any possible disciplinary proceedings, over which he would preside as head of the diplomatic service.

He told the committee last month that Mr Lloyd had been briefed about the Customs and

Excise investigation before he answered a Commons debate. Later the same day, he was forced to retract the evidence he had given about Mr Lloyd. Yesterday, though, he was reluctant even to repeat his earlier statements.

Yesterday he said: "I don't believe it is right for us to go further until all the aspects have been explored by the independent investigation. I am very uneasy about pursuing the matter now."

Sir John Stanley told him: "With great respect, you are taking yourself into very serious country indeed. It is unacceptable to refuse to answer a

question put to you directly related to your previous evidence. It is simply not acceptable to give non-answers."

Sir John Kerr was asked to reconsider his position, and could be called back yet again.

David Heath, the Liberal Democrat MP for Somerton and Frome, said afterwards: "If he wants to be before our committee for the rest of his life answering questions on Sierra Leone, this is the best way of doing it."

"As far as we are concerned the Legg inquiry is not a judicial one and we are perfectly entitled to ask whatever questions we choose," he said.

Hospital criticised over disastrous building project

THE REDEVELOPMENT of Guy's Hospital in London overran its budget by more than 80 per cent and was completed more than three years late in one of the worst cases of overspending in recent NHS history, the National Audit Office has found.

The hospital planned to spend £33.1m on building an eight-storey block, now known as Thomas Guy House, for completion at the end of 1992. After a series of accidents, including the removal of more than a mile of copper piping which was attacked by bacteria, the project was completed in April 1997 at a cost of £111.3m, £88.7 million over budget.

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust is currently suing the developers over the project, one of whom - P&O Developments - is countering. A spokesman for the trust said the question of responsibility for the cost in-

HEALTH

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

crease and delay was a matter for the courts. "We have entered litigation. It is for the courts to decide," he said.

The trust managed to find part of the extra money - the Treasury was forced to increase its contribution from £19.5m to £22.6m - but is still £28.8m short. This is being financed by temporary borrowing within the NHS.

The disaster is the second to befall a major hospital building project in the last decade. The 600-bed Chelsea and Westminster hospital, completed at a cost of £202m in 1992, also overran its budget and was criticised by the National Audit Office.

Sir John Bourn, the auditor general, says in the report that

the reasons for the cost increase at Guy's included changes to the design after construction had begun, delays to the building works, a large number of disputes with the contractors and the bankruptcy of one of them.

The NHS executive has now revised its guidance on the construction of major building projects in the light of experience at Chelsea and Westminster and Guy's. Sir John said the new advice, which highlights the importance of strong project leadership, "should help improve the planning and delivery of NHS construction projects".

Tim Matthews, chief executive of the trust, said: "The new trust inherited a troubled building project. It acted swiftly to establish control... The NAO identify many important lessons for NHS building projects."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Number of magistrates from ethnic minorities
Geoffrey Hoon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Lord Chancellor's Office, told Joan Humble (Lab, Blackpool North and Fleetwood) that 4.1 per cent of the magistrates who responded to a recent survey were from an ethnic minority.

Railway Complaints
Glenda Jackson, Transport Minister, said told Lindsay Hoyle (Lab, Chorley), that there had been a 94 per cent increase in the number of railway passenger complaints in the first three months of 1998 compared with the same period in 1997.

Injuries from cattle
Angela Eagle, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Environment, Transport and the Regions, told Tom Levitt (Lab, High Peak), that there were no plans to make any changes in law following a court case in which a walker sued a farmer after being injured by cattle.

THE HOUSE



BBC journalist to advise at No 10

LANCE PRICE, a political correspondent for the BBC, is to replace Tim Allan as an adviser at No 10 under Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's official spokesman.

Mr Price is the latest in a lengthening line of journalists joining the information teams at Whitehall, but he will be working as a party adviser within No 10, handling party issues.

Plan for young people's Parliament

PROPOSALS FOR a Youth Parliament which would allow teenagers to air their views were put forward yesterday by Andrew Rowe, the Conservative MP for Faversham and Mid Kent. The new body would be made up of young people drawn from existing youth forums. Under the proposals, Government ministers would respond to the issues raised.

Compensation for former miners

UP TO 13,000 former miners suffering from respiratory disease are to be offered interim compensation payments, energy minister John Birt said yesterday. In a Commons written reply, he said the Government was giving £2,000 to all claimants receiving Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit for chronic bronchitis and emphysema because of delays to a court case against the Government.

Today in Parliament

- Questions to David Clark, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
- Prime Minister's Question Time
- 10 minute debate on the restoration of damage done to Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Second Reading of the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Bill
- Adjournment debate tabled by Quentin Davies: Grantham Hospital

Labour drops papers price war curb

MEDIA

BY ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor

AN ATTACK on national newspaper price wars was deleted from the Government's Competition Bill yesterday.

The so-called Murdoch Amendment, inserted into the Bill by an alliance of Liberal Democrats and rebel Labour peers in the House of Lords last February, was painlessly extracted by the Government, by 17 votes to 2.

During a standing committee examination of the legislation, John Redwood, the Conservative spokesman, advised his Tory colleagues to abstain in a straight fight between the Liberal Democrats, led by David Chidgey, and the committee's predominant force of Labour MPs.

The amendment was tabled by Lord McNally, a Liberal Democrat who is a former Labour MP and No 10 aide to James Callaghan, as part of an attempt to curb the alleged predatory pricing of the Times.

The amendment was passed in February with the backing of some prominent Labour rebels, including Lord Hattersley, a former deputy leader of the party, along with three other former Labour cabinet ministers: Baroness Castle, Lord Shore and Lord Barnett.

Opening yesterday's debate, and defending the amendment, Mr Chidgey, MP for Eastleigh, denied any suggestion that price-cutting by the Times was a national and temporary affair, saying that it had been going on for five years.

Drawing on a briefing paper supplied to him by *The Independent*, Mr Chidgey argued that there was conflicting legal advice about the Bill as proposed by the Government, without the clause, and the question of predatory pricing needed to be clarified.

"There are serious questions of a potential failure of competition law to deal with predatory pricing," he said.

For the Opposition, Mr Redwood also said that there was a need for clarification, but he rejected the Liberal Democrat approach. "We are very unhappy with the drafting of the Bill," he said.

However, he rejected any question of a targeted approach against the newspaper industry as such, saying instead that the Conservatives would be happy to support a general amendment on a clarification of the law on predatory pricing, along with greater powers for the Office of Fair Trading to pursue complaints.

Mr Redwood said it was the Conservative view that people and organisations were innocent until proved guilty, and the same principle must apply to the Times.

If people wanted to supply new evidence about predatory pricing by the Times, it should be given to the relevant competition authorities.

Ian McCartney, the Trade and Industry Minister, denounced any suggestion that the legislation had been tilted to the advantage of Rupert Murdoch and News International, saying: "This Government is not in the process of giving favours. Any abuse would be dealt with under the terms of the strengthened legislation. 'The Government is proposing a very rigorous regime,' he said.

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مكتبة من الأدب

Conservatives promise new approach as leader prepares to celebrate first year in office. Interview by Colin Brown

Hague on warpath as Tories rally for fightback

WILLIAM HAGUE said yesterday that he will vote for the age of consent for gay sex to be reduced to 16 when the Commons considers the issue later this month.

The Tory leader was in his office preparing for a tête-à-tête over dinner with TUC leaders. It may have sounded like the agenda of an Old Labour warhorse, but this, he said, was indicative of his new "listening" approach.

Next door, Archie Norman - his former boss at business consultants McKinsey - was telling the troops they would be facing a shake up at Conservative Central Office. It is a hard way to mark Mr Hague's first year in the job, but he says the time for excuses is over.

The party has seen a haemorrhage of its business backers, and is being forced to make cuts to keep within its £4m overdraft limit. But Mr Hague said it was not just a cuts exercise. "I expect it to cost less but I expect it to do more," he said of his party machine. "Archie is liberating the talent in them. Making sure that people know where they stand, who they report to."

Those who have their "talent"

'I hope to appoint more women but I need more women MPs'

liberated" may feel differently. Morale has been rock bottom, the party finances are said by insiders to be "dire", and Mr Norman has upset the party old guard with his McKinsey-style executive vim.

He said Mr Norman was beginning the review of staff, making sure that a leaner fitter party hits harder. "Some of it will be dead wood. We are making sure party resources are deployed in the right way. We will be doing a lot more attacking because there is more to attack."

"I told the Shadow Cabinet last week I expect a universally high level of activity," Mr Hague said. "We have now passed the point where anyone can have any excuse for being shell-shocked and not knowing what to do."

In his spartan office, Mr Hague sounded like an Asda executive after a bad set of figures. "We have just had a year where of course we spent a lot of time on our own internal party organisation. It was right to do that. We will be spending less time talking to each other and more time talking to the country. After the World Cup, we will be launching *Listening to Britain*."

Voting for lowering of the legal age for gay sex in the forthcoming vote in the Com-

mons will raise a few eyebrows in the party, not least those of his newly-appointed shadow Health Secretary, Anne Widdicombe, who is campaigning on family values. Some die-hard Tories may think gay rights and family values do not go together, but Mr Hague sees no contradiction in his position.

"I will vote the same as in the past. I will listen to the debate. I voted for an equal age of consent, and unless somebody gives me some good arguments I have not heard yet, I will do so again. That is what I mean about supporting the family. I am not saying everybody has to live the same way."

"I think of marriage being a man and a woman living together, having children and bringing up a family, but I am not saying that you should try to prevent people living with each other in different ways."

On 19 June, he will be celebrating his first year as Conservative leader. Although he described his marriage to Fiona as the most important event of the past 12 months, since becoming leader he has been criticised for surrounding himself with eager, capable young men, but no senior women advisers.

"I brought a woman into the Shadow Cabinet and I have appointed women to the front bench [Theresa May made her promising debut this week]. I hope to appoint more women in the future, but I need more women MPs. I only have 14 at the moment."

"We are not going to go about that by all-women shortlists or quotas. That would be wrong in principle." Instead he is setting up a network for professional young women, under Peta Buscombe, appointed yesterday to encourage Tory women across the country to stand for Parliament.

The reshuffle which brought old-stagers such as Sir Norman Fowler and Miss Widdicombe back into the front line, however effective, showed the paucity of new blood available. He defends his choice of a Tory aristocrat, Michael Ancram, as party chairman to take over from Lord Parkinson at the annual conference in October. Michael, he says, is well-liked and affable. Mr Hague means he is good man to have on the "rubber-chicken" run to repair the damage with the party in the country after the defeat.

Mr Hague sees no contradiction in claiming to be the great moderniser of the Tory party while at the same time being forced into a last-ditch defence of the hereditary principle. He is now embarking on a constitutional battle over reform of the House of Lords, the like of which may not have been since the passing of the Parliament Act over 80 years ago.

Last night's dinner with the TUC leaders was his second big meal of the day. "I do eat a lot," he admitted. "I burn up a lot of fuel." For the task ahead, he will need all the energy he can get.



William Hague: 'We have now passed the point where anyone can have any excuse for being shell-shocked and not knowing what to do'

Photograph: David Rose

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General grapples with nation in chaos

FOR A man who has never before held a political post, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, former chief of defence staff and now Nigeria's eighth military ruler since independence in 1960, faces an awesome task.

Ethnic division, political tension, economic decay and international isolation are just part of the legacy he has inherited from his predecessor, General Sani Abacha, who died of a heart attack last Monday.

Political prisoners and plans to restore constitutional government will be pressing issues at the top of his agenda. On the streets, there has been jubilation in some quarters at the passing of Nigeria's most uncompromising head of state, and unease in others over what the future under General Abubakar might hold.

"Again, the government of our country appears to be an exclusively military matter," one merchant banker in the commercial capital, Lagos, said yesterday. "We are still looking for any sign that this change will empower the people."

BY ANTONY GOLDMAN

Popular considerations have rarely weighed heavily on the minds of the military men who have ruled the country since the collapse of the civilian Second Republic amidst allegations of fraud, corruption and mismanagement in 1983.

General Abubakar's priority will be to try to overcome an apparent split within the military over what role it should play in the political process, which could fatally weaken his position.

General Abacha's closest supporters advocated following a path well-trodden by other military rulers in west Africa, such as Jerry Rawlings in Ghana, or Blaise Compaore in Burkina Faso, who have successfully transformed themselves into constitutional, civilian presidents.

Others, including Nigeria's chief of army staff, Major-General Ishaya Barnaji, have publicly called for the military to distance itself from politics. This call for a full return to the barracks, they argue, is a vital precondition for a genuine, sta-

ble democracy. Privately, they fear that further engagement in politics, particularly in the manner proposed by General Abacha, might prove so corrosive as to fatally undermine the integrity of the military as an effective institution.

General Abubakar has never publicly aligned himself with either tendency, although his reputation as a professional soldier - he served with the United Nations in Lebanon in the Eighties - is unlikely to endear him to those looking to cement the military's role in politics, such as Lieutenant-General Jerry Useni, minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

"He's unlikely to have everyone's confidence," remarked a Western diplomat in the capital, Abuja, "and his position remains far from secure."

If he is to please Washington and Europe, Nigeria's new head of state will need to release high-profile detainees, such as the former presidential aspirant, Chief Moshood Abiola, who was charged with treason in 1994 after declaring himself the winner of elections annulled by

the military a year earlier. Friday marks the fifth anniversary of that annulment, and could provide the opportunity for hitherto divided and demoralised radical opposition groups, operating principally in Chief Abiola's Yoruba south-west, to put on a show of strength.

Also in prison is the former head of state and respected international statesman, General Olusegun Obasanjo. Such a move would antagonise Abacha loyalists, however, and might provoke hostility elsewhere in the northern, Islamic, establishment which has traditionally dominated Nigerian politics.

General Abubakar, although a Muslim, is from a minority tribe in the north and will find it difficult to rule without the support of the Hausa-Fulani majority.

The most awkward problem with which the new leadership will have to deal is what to do with General Abacha's programme to restore civilian rule, due to be completed by October.

A government spokesman, Air Vice Marshal Isaac Alfa said in Abuja that the regime would stick to the timetable to restore

civilian rule by 1 October, as Abacha promised. However, he did not say whether the August date for presidential elections would be respected.

The democracy process under General Abacha had been widely criticised abroad and generated little enthusiasm in Nigeria. The five registered political parties lacked any ideology, appearing only as vehicles for the individual ambition of wealthy personalities. All had eagerly pressed for the adoption of General Abacha as their consensus candidate, leading radical groups to call for the scrapping of the entire process.

The new head of state, in any case, may find it technically impossible to proceed with a process which appeared to have as its only purpose the installation of General Abacha as constitutional president.

However, a return to the free-for-all of open political competition also carries risks, with the civilian political class prone to influence-peddling and money politics.

In addition, General Abubakar inherits an economy in a

state of collapse. Health care, education and social infrastructure are in a woeful condition. Even petrol is in short supply - in a country which produces more than two million barrels of oil a day.

As with Nigeria's political problems, economic distress, while not created by General Abacha, worsened under his tenure. According to recent World Bank figures, Nigeria now ranks amongst the 20 poorest countries in the world, despite 20 years as one of the world's biggest oil producers.

General Abubakar has declared a week of national mourning, in which the politicking now likely to take place will happen in private. To the nation, the new head of state has appealed only for "all hands on deck".

"We're hoping it is an appeal for unity to turn the country around," said one diplomat, "not a preparation to get into the lifeboats".

Antony Goldman is senior Africa editor at the Economist Intelligence Unit



General Abubakar, facing an awesome task

AP



Children arriving in Rome with other Italians on a special flight from Asmara, Eritrea. P. Lippi/AP

Fierce border fighting as Eritrea calls for urgent talks

HEAVY FIGHTING erupted along the Ethiopian-Eritrean frontier yesterday as the Horn of Africa neighbours turned their experienced armies against each other in the latest stage of their undeclared war.

Ethiopia accused Eritrea of launching a major offensive early yesterday. Eritrea in turn said its neighbour had started the latest battle, which included intense shelling, mortar and tank fire.

Residents of Adigrat, some 15 miles south of the Ethiopian border town Zalambessa, and the last sizeable Ethiopian town before the frontier, were woken at 5am by the sound of battle.

Officials said that villages in between were being pounded by the Eritreans, who were on the offensive with an "incredible array of heavy weapons".

An Ethiopian government spokeswoman said Ethiopian troops had repulsed three attacks in the area. The Eritreans insisted, however, that they held the upper hand.

The latest flare-up follows a call by Eritrea for direct talks between the two former friends. Eritrean President Issaias Afewerki told Reuters in an interview in the Eritrean capital, Asmara, that he had no problem with meeting Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, but said he feared the conflict would escalate first.

Ethiopia rejected the call, saying there could be no negotiations while Eritrea occupied "part of our territory by force". United States proposals call for Eritrean forces to withdraw

BY ROSALIND RUSSELL in Adigrat

to positions held before 6 May and for the demilitarisation of disputed territory.

The row has posed a diplomatic test for the Organisation of African Unity, whose annual summit is currently under way in Burkina Faso.

Tension remained high in the Eritrean capital yesterday after the Ethiopian and Eritrean air forces traded bombing raids that killed nearly 50 people and hastened the evacuation of around 2,000 foreign nationals from Asmara.

Ethiopia's foreign ministry, meanwhile, reported that Eritrea had expelled more than 3,000 Ethiopians after confiscating their property and detained over 500 others.

Hostilities erupted on 6 May over a rocky triangle of land which both countries claim, but Ethiopia says economic issues are at the root of the conflict. Eritrea last year introduced its own currency, the nakfa, and wanted it to be directly exchangeable with the Ethiopian birr in cross-border transactions.

Both sides have mobilised veterans of the shared guerrilla struggle which overthrew the Ethiopian military dictator, Mengistu Haile Mariam, in 1991.

Eritrea took its independence from Ethiopia after a referendum in 1993 and the two countries were on friendly terms until the border disagreement turned violent.

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DONU KOGBARA

President Abacha took pleasure in humiliation, hurting and killing people. He was a sadist and a psychopath.

THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4



BY IMRE KARACS
IN BONN

Yeltsin: to lean on Serbia

In Albania, the number of ethnic Albanian refugees fleeing to northern Albania to escape violence in Kosovo appeared to have stabilised at around 200 to 300 people per day, well down on levels when the influx started 10 days ago. The total number of refugees who have fled military operations by Serbian security forces is estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000.

هَذَا مِنْ الْأَصْلِ



A stonemason works on one of the heavy sandstone blocks for the proposed Hindu temple in Ayodhya, northern India

AFP

UN treads carefully in Kashmiri minefield

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

INDIA may claim to detect UN Security Council backing for its position in the dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir. But a gun battle on Monday night in which Indian troops shot dead four separatists only underscores how, more than half a century after Partition, the quarrel over the territory – a prime ingredient in the nuclear arms race on the sub-continent – is more intractable and dangerous than ever.

According to an Indian army spokesman yesterday, the fighting took place near the border with Pakistan, which Delhi accuses of arming and training Kashmiri separatists who want independence for the predominantly Muslim territory or unification with Pakistan. The guerrillas are the latest to die in an insurgency which has cost perhaps 25,000 lives since it began in 1990.

All of which would seem to make the United Nations resolution, passed on Saturday night, an innocuous statement of the obvious. It urges the two countries to resume dialogue and to find "mutually acceptable solutions" to address "the root causes" of the tensions between them, "including Kashmir". For Delhi, however, what matters is what wasn't there: any reference to outside mediation to resolve the dispute.

Hitherto, the UN's formal stand on Kashmir has been its resolution of August 1948, demanding that both India and Pakistan withdraw most of their troops from the territory they had fought over that year, ahead of a plebiscite administered by the UN.

Ever since, Pakistan has clung to that formula, partly out of confidence that the Muslim majority in Kashmir would vote its way in any plebiscite, and partly because it was unlikely to prevail in one-on-one talks with a more powerful neighbour.

That is precisely why India rejects what it sees as outside meddling, and insists a solution must be found by the protagonists alone. Purely bilateral talks would be "fruitless", Pakistan's foreign minister, Gohar Ayub Khan, reiterated yesterday.

In fact it is not clear the UN has given up all aspirations to mediate a dispute arguably more likely than any other to go nuclear. Although the five permanent members of the Security Council made no explicit mention of mediation when they met last week to press India and Pakistan to drop their nuclear ambitions, the subtext told a different story.

The five – Britain, the United States, France, Russia and China – undertook to "do all they could do to facilitate a reduction of tensions", and provide "assistance, at the request of both parties, in the implementation of confidence, and security-building measures". Which sounds very much like a mediation offer which dare not speak its name.

But Kashmir is a subject where one verbal slip by a well-meaning outsider can cause an international incident.

Temple to rise on rubble of mosque

INDIA'S MOST contentious building project, the temple to Ram which Hindu nationalists want tiered on the god's alleged birthplace, has been secretly under construction for the past seven years, India was stunned to discover last week. The architect is the man responsible for the huge Hindu temple, the Saminrayan, in Neasden, north London.

The intended site of the temple in the north-Indian town of Ayodhya, resembles a war zone. This is the spot where in 1994 the destruction of an ancient mosque, the Babri Masjid, by the nationalists, sparked communal rioting which took hundreds of lives. Today the site is shrouded in barbed wire and dotted with watchtowers. The mosque ruins are patrolled by soldiers 24-hours a day.

Work began, it has been revealed, at the end of 1991, with just eight craftsmen. In 1995, with more than £1m in contributions amassed, work began in earnest. Three firms of stone masons, two in Rajasthan and one in Uttar Pradesh, are prefabricating the decorated sandstone blocks with which the temple will be constructed.

At one of the three sites, at Karsejakpuram in Uttar Pradesh, only three miles from the disputed site, stone-cutting machines slice huge lumps of sandstone into columns, and 50 artisans chisel the forms of gods, goddesses and decorative hills and furlongs on to them.

The news of the Ayodhya temple's surreptitious construction, revealed by the *Week* magazine, has shocked the opposition parties and thrown the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party-led government, so recently flush with its nuclear coup, on to its back foot.

The general secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), one of the extremist Hindu organisations devoted to building the temple, added fuel to the fire, saying actual construction of the temple could start within two years, and would be initiated whether or not the BJP is still in power in Delhi.

"No power on earth," he said, "not even the Supreme Court, can stop the VHP from building the Ram temple at Ayodhya."

Militant statements like this have sent BJP ministers scuttling for cover. The building of the Ram temple was a central plank of the BJP's election manifesto – the home minister Lal Krishna Advani and other

BY PETER POPHAM
in New Delhi

BJP ministers face criminal charges for their role in the mosque's demolition.

But, to fashion a "national agenda" acceptable to all its disparate coalition partners, all reference to Ayodhya was dropped from the government's programme. In response, the leading Congress politician Rajesh Pilot demanded to know whether the government was pursuing a "hidden agenda"; and, perhaps in protest at the fact that it probably is, the opposition walked out.

The site of the temple which the VHP and its allies wish to build at Ayodhya is one of the strangest and most disturbing plots of land in the country. Drawn by the controversy, and perhaps also by pious feelings towards the god Ram, aggressive Indian chauvinists are thick on the ground: it may be the only place in India where a white man feels distinctly unwanted, and implicitly under threat.

Wracked by one invasion after another over the past millennium, Ayodhya looks as if it has reconciled itself to living amidst the ruins. It is dusty, shabby, decrepit, uncared for.

Only after thorough and serious security checks is one allowed to proceed to "darshan" – "god-viewing" – at the small white tent containing an image of the god Ram, which the zealots erected following the demolition of the mosque. After a couple of seconds, one is prodded forward. The pilgrimage is over.

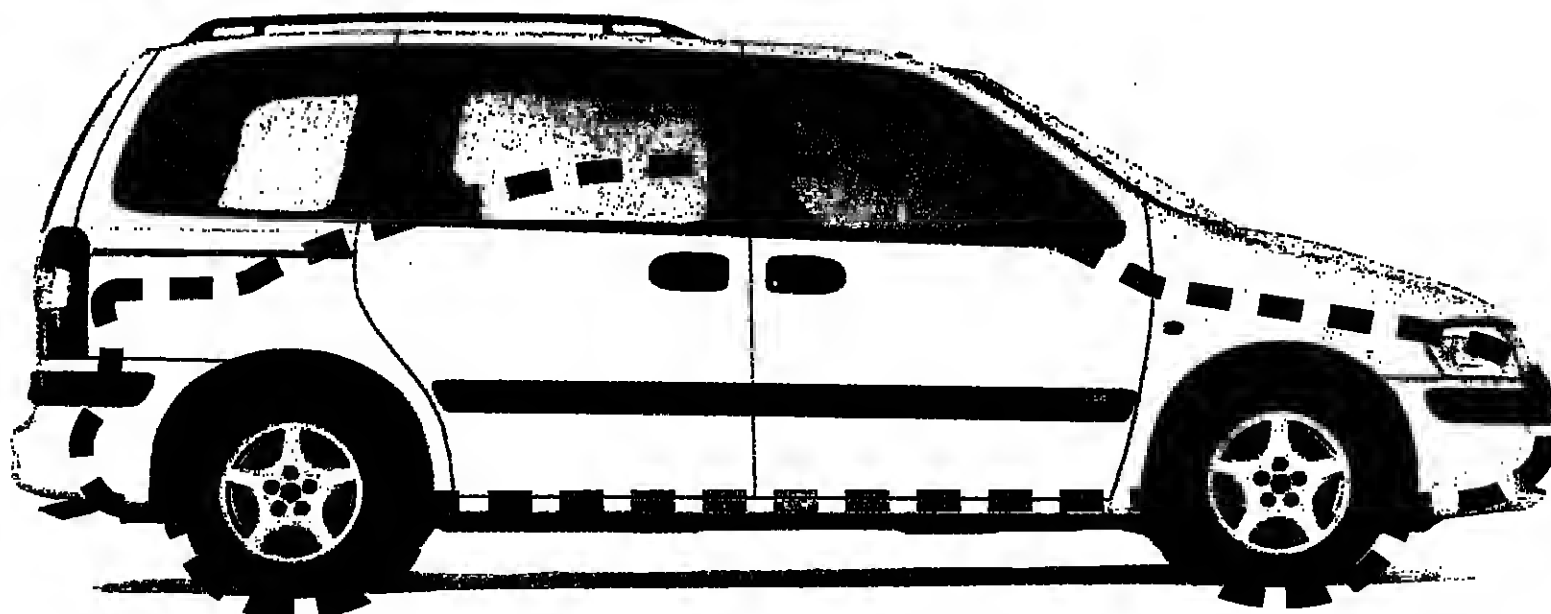
Ayodhya is tense because more than anywhere in India, it is where the communal energy of the Hindu nationalists has been concentrated; it is where they have chosen to stand and fight. The VHP has built Ram up into a mighty ruler, and thus the symbol of the nation.

The substance of the Hindu complaint is true: Muslim invaders did, in their own intolerant zealotry, destroy many Hindu temples, and sometimes built mosques on the same sites. Ayodhya is where the militant Hindus – by no means representative of all practitioners of the religion – plan to get their grand revenge.

The Ram temple is intended to be four times the size of London's, so its building will be a correspondingly greater challenge – especially if it is done in the teeth of bitter opposition.

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Mandelson teases French Left

BY JOHN LICKFIELD
in Paris

LONG BEFORE he became president of France, François Mitterrand visited a Labour Party conference in Blackpool. After enduring a couple of days of black votes and fish suppers, he made a dash for home. On the way to Heathrow Airport, west of London, he asked the chauffeur to divert to Kew Gardens. "I cannot leave England," he said, "without having seen something of elegance and beauty..."

We are now just over one year into an era of left-of-centre governments on both sides of the Channel: the first time for 50 years that experiments in socialism (if new Labour will forgive the word) have been conducted simultaneously in France and Britain.

Peter Mandelson, the minister without portfolio and the master-tactician of the Blair government, was at the National Assembly in Paris yesterday to mark the anniversary. He had been invited to debate with his French alter ego, François Hollande, general secretary of the Socialist Party, the similarities and differences between Blairism and Jospinism.

It was a fascinating debate, except that both men supported the same proposition: that the two governments are pursuing similar policies in two very different countries, which are perhaps not so different in the end. "Britain and France have much in common. Blair and Jospin have even more in common, perhaps more than people realise even now," Mr Mandelson said. "Both Blair and Jospin have succeeded in restoring confidence in politics and confidence in politicians," said Mr Hollande.

Not much scope for controversy there, then. What has become of the fraternal jealousies between the Labour Party and the Parti Socialiste? A few months ago some new Labour people were making snide remarks about the "old Labour" Jospinists with their 35-hour weeks; and some French Socialists (notably Martine Aubry, the employment minister) could not disguise their exasperation with the born-again evangelism of new Labour.

Since then, Tony Blair's triumphant domination of British



The debate in Paris between Peter Mandelson (left) minister without portfolio, and his French counterpart, François Hollande, revealed a wealth of common ground

politics has continued, with only a few dents and doubts: Lionel Jospin, against all expectations (in Britain at any rate) has become a quietly competent success. The French economy is humming (give or take a few strikes); unemployment is falling; Mr Jospin has higher poll ratings (just over 60 per cent) than any other French prime minister has ever recorded after a year in office.

The two governments, whether they admit it or not, remain rivals in an undeclared race to invent an intelligent, durable new formula for left-of-centre European politics in the next century. But they seem, increasingly, to be friendly ri-

vals. The two parties have set up study groups on social exclusion and the future of the European Union.

Unlike the mutually uncomprehending British and French socialist politicians of recent history (witness the Mitterrand anecdote), the Blairists and Jospinists appear to be easy in each other's company. The great exceptions are the two finance ministers, Gordon Brown and Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who do not get on.

Mr Mandelson, talking briefly after yesterday's lecture, admitted that "things got off on the wrong foot" between the two governments last year; or at least in the media pre-

sentation of relations between the two. "That's why today's event was important," he said, "unable to resist the temptation to 'spin' a journalist, wherever he might find one."

But just how similar are Blairism and Jospinism? Messrs Mandelson and Hollande put up strong arguments for the family likeness. Both governments are committed to educational reform as the strategic weapon of economic success in the next century; both have introduced programmes of youth job creation; Mr Blair plans a French-style minimum wage; Mr Jospin talks of encouraging economic dynamism while maintaining



"social solidarity"; Mr Blair ditto, while talking of maintaining "a strong community".

Both men are trying to push through constitutional reforms which would modernise their countries' democratic systems. Both men have been lucky in strong economies and the hopelessness of their oppositions.

But there are equally telling differences. In a sense, there has been a bizarre reversal of the traditional British and French roles. It is Mr Jospin who is the true steady-as-we-go pragmatist. Mr Blair is the ideologue, food of sweeping phrases.

Mr Blair inherited a booming economy, in which many of the blockages which still afflict

France had been cleared away by the Thatcherist pain cure of the Eighties. He also came to power with a huge majority of one party. Mr Jospin inherits a French system which is permanently attempting reform and permanently fearful of reform. His majority is a coalition of socialists, of various independent persuasions, Communists and Greens.

Mr Blair has applied a grand design to a clean page: Mr Jospin has been forced to tinker, fudging here, taking a bold decision there. Given these differences, it is remarkable how many similarities have emerged between the two governments.

(The main differences remain over labour market policy, with Mr Jospin heavily committed to the interventionist, 35-hour week.)

If the Social Democrats come to power, as expected, in Germany in September, all of Western Europe's big three nations will have centre-left governments for the first time in EU history. In terms of dash, glamour and self-publicity, Blairism will be the model for the SPD's chancellor candidate, Gerhard Schröder. But he will inherit problems closer to those of France—a parliamentary coalition, a top-heavy state. He may end up governing more like a Jospin.

Blair says British ideas are reforming Europe

BY KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels

A POLITICAL hijacking which would mar next week's short piece European Union summit in Cardiff would be Tony Blair's worst nightmare come true. Yesterday, he moved to prevent such a drama by throwing his weight behind a new Franco-German initiative to bring Europe closer to the people.

After the fractious scene which turned last month's Brussels summit on the European Central Bank—the first under his chairmanship—into a public relations fiasco, the Prime Minister is determined to end his six months as Europe's president on a high note.

He clearly sees his best bet in a new mood emanating from Germany, and backed by France, which rejects the notion of a European superstate in which local and regional diversity would be obliterated.

In Brussels, Mr Blair pointed to a letter from the German and French leaders to underline what he sees as the growing appetite on the continent for two Blair inventions. One is a remedy for a Europe "too remote to be relevant to its people"; the other is the vision of a Europe-wide model of employment which is "modern, adaptable and flexible" not "stifled by regulation and red tape."

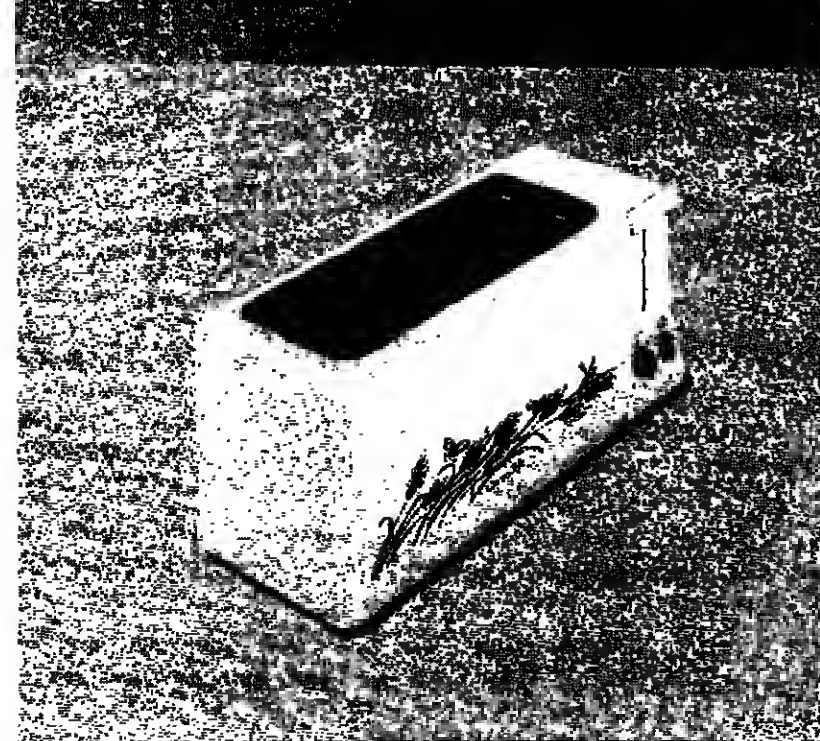
In the letter, intended by Chancellor Kohl of Germany and the French President Jacques Chirac to set the agenda for the Cardiff summit, the leaders rejected further centralised decision making.

Mr Blair said he is now convinced that British ideas are having an effect. "There is a gathering consensus behind the idea of a reformed vision of a Europe for the future. People are seeing that that is the only way to make it work."

A list of "no go" areas could be drawn up which would reassure people that Brussels will never be given power to legislate such as on income tax or education policy or as Mr Blair hopes, on the rights of workers to be informed and consulted.

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Mystery virus kills 31 children in Taiwan

BY STEPHEN VINES
in Taipei

A MYSTERIOUS viral disease is sweeping across Taiwan, claiming the lives of children under five years of age. Yesterday it claimed its 31st victim. Up to half a million children could be infected by the virus. Some suffer symptoms no more disturbing than those associated with a heavy cold, but others are struck by serious infections of the heart and lungs, or even sudden and seemingly inexplicable death.

In the capital, Taipei, the government yesterday called together specialists, doctors and regional representatives from throughout the country to meet representatives from the United States-based Centres for Disease Control to plan their next move in fighting the disease.

"This is a disease without a vaccine, so how can you prevent it? It's a disease without a medicine, so how can you treat it?" asked Dr Wang Lib-Shiun, the director general of the health department's Bureau of Communicable Disease Control. Across the country parents are keeping their children away from nursery schools, while a health department hotline has been besieged. Clinics are full of anxious parents concerned that their children may succumb to the disease.

"We are very worried about this disease," says Sherry Chien, a mother of two small boys. Her youngest, aged four, developed a cold last week. The family rushed him off to hospital for a check. Fortunately it proved to be no more than a common cold, but this virus can manifest itself as a cold in the early stages. Some of those who died did so within hours of showing cold symptoms as the virus sped through their bodies attacking the vital organs and central nervous system.

"This is really an epidemic now," says Hsu Kwo-Hsiung,



A stricken six-month-old baby in Taipei

Reuters

the spokesman for the health department's crisis team. He explains that the disease can be contracted orally, by person-to-person contact, and is airborne, making it highly contagious. The local media has been saying that the virus is of the enterovirus type 71 which spread across Malaysia last year and emerged in Bulgaria and Hungary during the 1970s. However Dr Umesh Parashar, an epidemiologist from the Centres for Disease Control, insists that it is too early to say what the virus is or whether, as some doctors believe, it is a collection of viruses.

Intestinal viral diseases are common during the late spring and early summer in Taiwan but usually pass without leaving fatalities. According to Dr Wang, at any time some 30 per cent of the population will have enterovirus in their bodies but in most cases it does not cause illness. It is highly problematic to screen potential victims of these viruses because it is impossible to tell which people will be affected by them in a serious or lethal way.

This virus, or combination of

viruses, is hitting the very young because they have not developed the immunity which builds up in older people. Of the 145 patients admitted to hospital, 20 per cent have died and 65 were discharged.

The first fatality occurred on 15 May in the centre of Taiwan. Other deaths and reports of viral infection soon flowed in. Nursery schools across the country shut their doors to avoid the spread of infection. Parents were warned not to take their children to crowded places and to be extra vigilant about personal hygiene.

The initial panic has been brought under control but parents and child care workers remain vigilant. "Parents are very worried," says Yen Su-Chen, the principal of the Wei Kindergarten in Taipei. "They ask me how they should handle this." She tells them to make sure their children wash their hands and if they show the slightest signs of illness, not to bring them to the nursery. Two children out of the 76 attending the kindergarten have been affected, though there have been no fatalities.

Parents arriving to collect their children from Wei yesterday evening were taking no chances. Chao Chuen says that she is not relying on the government to solve the problem. "We must do what is necessary ourselves," she says.

Apparent government inaction is stirring up a political storm, which the active opposition parties are quick to exploit. An editorial in the usually pro-government *China Times* said that the government "has failed to come up with an effective and concrete package to calm down panic-stricken parents and stop the spread of the virus."

At first the government sought to calm fears by suggesting that the outbreak was not serious. It then promised that it would end quickly. The public was not convinced.

"People are not satisfied with what we have done," concedes Dr Wang, but he asks what they expect to be done in stopping the spread of an unknown virus with no known antidote.

The only comfort to be drawn from this viral epidemic, according to Dr Parashar, is that outbreaks of this kind do not tend to last very long. If it turns out to be the enterovirus type 71, and it follows the pattern established in Malaysia last year, he says, it should go away soon.

Meanwhile practically every day brings news of at least one new fatality. The unease is growing and small children are seen much less frequently in public places.

Houses are being cleaned as they have never been cleaned before. Even though precautions are being taken, the uncertainty about the disease looms ominously over Taiwan, which has had its share of typhoid, cholera and dengue fever outbreaks, all of which caused fatalities. However, when those epidemics came around, doctors at least knew what they were dealing with.

مكلا من ألال

hair says
British
deas are
reforming
Europe

Sister act keeps wealth and power in family

SPANIARDS HAVE been goggling at the latest convulsion in the saga of the glamorous mega-rich Koplowitz sisters, a once inseparable pair who fell out over ownership of the multi-million pound cement empire founded in the 1960s by their Polish immigrant father.

Alicia Koplowitz announced six months ago she was fed up with the whole thing and wanted to sell her 28 percent share, sending Spain's mighty bureaucracy into a frenzied pursuit of buyers.

But the other day sister Esther decided to fork out herself the 136.6 million pesetas (£570m) to keep the firm in the family.

The deal made Alicia, 45, the richest woman in Spain and Esther, 47, the most powerful, and sprayed Dynasty-style photos of both across the covers of every glossy magazine in the country.

Years back they were rated by *Harper's* and *Queen* magazine the eighth and ninth richest women in Europe, and *Fortune* magazine estimated their joint wealth at US\$2bn (£1.34bn), among the world's top 200. Yet neither

EUROPEAN
TIMES
MADRID

woman was groomed for the cut-throat world of business and high finance.

Orphaned when their father Ernesto fell fatally from his horse in 1962, the two sisters married at 18 and 20 to two cousins, both called Alberto. The "two Albertos" ran the company ConyCon (Construcciones y Contratos) and the sisters stayed at home as dutiful wives and mothers.

The company flourished and the Albertos became rich and powerful. But in 1988, in a twist that a soap-opera scriptwriter might have discarded as too improbable, Alicia was devastated to discover her Alberto (Cortina) carrying on with a mistress, Marta Chavarr, while Esther found her Alberto (Alcocer) embroiled with a former model, whom he subsequently married. Both affairs were minutely dis-



Spain's most powerful woman Esther Koplowitz and her former husband Alberto Alcocer

sected by Spain's voracious gossip magazines.

At a stroke, each sister promptly divorced her husband and in 1990, Esther and Alicia emerged from the

pair crisply presided over weekly directors' meetings with their trademark elegant suits, smart earrings and décolletages.

Various Spanish and international companies were circling predatorily around Alicia's juicy share at the moment Esther stepped in to prevent the possible break-up of the family firm.

As any convincing family saga would dictate, the deal seems to have been engineered by the solicitous Albertos, eager to protect the interests of their offspring: Esther has three daughters, Alicia three sons, several of whom have important positions in the Koplowitz empire.

Will the two sisters start talking to each other again? Which of Spain's powerful banks will be favoured with the investment of Alicia's windfall fortune? Can Esther prosper on her own in the shark-infested world of Spanish cement? Will the clans of cousins shed blood over their mothers' dazzling inheritance? Stay tuned.

Pulp novelists tempted to appropriate this promising material

should be warned that the real-life tale has so far superseded anything you could invent.

Talking of inventions, the former interior minister in Felipe Gonzalez's first socialist government, Jose Barrioñuevo, has been protesting his innocence before the Supreme Court this week against accusations of conducting illegal undercover operations against suspected Basque separatists. Mr Barrioñuevo faces 23 years in jail, and 11 of his former security chiefs and policemen also face hefty jail sentences.

Mr Barrioñuevo's behaviour has been curious. He denies the accusations of organising gangs of hit-men, paying them with state funds and authorising the kidnapping of at least one innocent French businessman, as "pure invention". Nothing surprising in that. But he then says he is prepared to assume all the responsibility, even for things he says did not happen, to let his former colleagues off the book.

This prompted one cartoonist to portray a judge advising his crum-

pled plaintiff: "Making a false confession is one thing, but you don't need to swear to the court that you will do so."

Also in trouble with the courts is Francisco Franco, the dictator's grandson. The Civil Guard hauled him up recently for hunting offences: totting a shotgun in the closed season, and hunting without a permit. Caught in the act, it seems Francisco junior threw a punch or two.

What seems to have most riled him was that the official did the natural thing under the circumstances and asked the offender to show his identity card. Mr Franco bears his grandfather's name because his mother, General Franco's daughter, illegally flouted strict regulations governing Spanish surnames in order to perpetuate her father's memory.

The paramilitary plod reported that the heir to the *generalissimo* who governed with iron discipline for 40 years retorted: "Are you mad or something? I'm off."

ELIZABETH NASH



Rowena Erickson, left, with Stacy and Vicky, with whom she is setting up a support group for women seeking to escape from polygamous relationships Fred Hayes

Mormon wives lift veil on the miseries of polygamy

BOX ELDER County, in the far north-west corner of Utah, is only sparsely populated. But it gets its share of crime. When the telephone started ringing in the county sheriff's office at 3am three Sundays ago it was a fair bet someone out there was in trouble.

With a broken nose and her legs in arms swollen with bruises, a 16-year-old girl had struggled seven miles to a petrol station to find a telephone. She had been beaten and threatened by her father, she said. But the girl began to fill in details only reluctantly, and after hours of interviews at the sheriff's office. After driving 90 miles from their home south of Salt Lake City, her father had threatened her repeatedly and threatened her about 20 times with a father belt.

The girl gave her father's name. The police knew it. It was John Daniel Kingston, patriarch of the largest polygamist clan in Utah. The girl said she had been forced to marry after her 16th birthday. The beating was meant as punishment after she had run away from her husband's uncle for a second time.

"She didn't want to pursue charges and she didn't want to give us any names," explained Detective Scott Cosgrove, head of the investigation. "All she wanted was to be allowed to lead a normal life for a 16-year-old to school and not be the 11th wife of a man she doesn't want to be married to."

Finally, though, she agreed that charges could be pressed. Last Tuesday, hours before a court-scheduled hearing, Mr Kingston surrendered to the sheriff and was released on \$10,000 bail. Later this week, he will appear

By DAVID USBORNE
in Salt Lake City

in court to be formally charged with child abuse.

His trial, however, will be about much more. It promises to lift the lid on Utah's most awkward secret. Polygamy imported into the state by Mormon pioneers 150 years ago, is alive and well.

We know little about Utah's polygamists because no one wants to talk about them. They are an anathema to the mainstream Mormon Church, formerly the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints, which banned polygamy in 1904 and dissociates itself from the fundamentalist Mormons still practising it.

Likewise, polygamists represent an acute embarrassment to a state that will stage the Winter Olympics in 2002 and which cultivates an image of prosperity and modernity. According to some experts, polygamy is still practised by 50,000 to 60,000 fundamentalists in Utah. While it is technically against the law, the authorities have preferred not to prosecute, opting always to turn a very deliberate blind eye.

There are other reasons for the reluctance. Polygamous families are secretive and self-reliant, perhaps paranoid, and skilled at deflecting outsiders, police investigators especially. "They don't like the spotlight and they don't like attention," Det Cosgrove said. "They make it very difficult for us, giving us phoney addresses and things like that. Basically they want us to believe they don't exist."

Polygamist men, who sometimes have 20 wives or more, have circumvented the law by registering only the first of their marriages with the civil authorities. Their subsequent marriages are conducted in



Polygamist Alex Joseph and his nine wives Tom Smart

secret. Moreover, any attempt to enforce the law and to disband plural families would hit delicate constitutional issues likely to go all the way to the Supreme Court.

With the Kingston incident, however, the authorities suddenly found themselves not only with an opportunity to start turning over the polygamist stone, but an obligation to do so. The case, after all, is about abuse. Abuse of women is what most of us think about in connection with polygamy. That and sex.

"I'll tell you what polygamy is in a nutshell: it's one big eternal fuck in the name of God," spat Rowena Erickson last week. "No more, no less."

Ms Erickson, 58, should know. In 1984, she fled the Kingston clan with eight children after 34 years of marriage to Leon Kingston, son of the group's founder and a cousin of John Daniel. Leon still has one other wife, Rowena's elder sister. For four years, she

scrutiny by federal law enforcement agencies for some time. Illegal gambling, for example, is suspected. But Ms Erickson believes there is more. "I saw the illegal activities going on. I had heard rumours that they had mafia connections, which I believe they do, and I had heard that they had had people bumped off. And I believe they are laundering money for the 'Mormon Mafia' in Las Vegas."

It took years for Ms Erickson to realise that her religious beliefs, which included the notion that polygamy was a prerequisite for the attainment of eternal celestial bliss - was not enough to sustain her. "I was thinking, if this is so wonderful, why do I feel so horrible? Why is my gut telling me something is amiss?" Finally, she went and told Leon: "I'm not living this god-damned fuck-up polygamy any more." And she left.

Public relations is not a skill widely held by polygamists. But, conscious of the bad publicity from the Kingston case, Bart Malstrom, the husband of four wives and 12 children, agreed to talk. On rainy afternoon in Fairview, two hours south of Salt Lake, Bart, 39, Pam, 38, Wendy, 33, Mocique, 27, and Nicole, 23, (these last two are also sisters) gathered in the living room in one of their three houses clustered together to explain the joy of their life.

On the face of it, it was a convincing display. The children, ranging in age from seven months to 17 years, made the occasional appearance.

The family survives by manufacturing and marketing a herbal, medicinal tincture and growing their own vegetables. Their church, one of many splinter fundamentalist Mormon churches that still encourages polygamy, is called the "True and Living Church of

Jesus Christ of Last Day Saints".

"It's a sad thing any time that a father would abuse any child," offered Bart, an imposing figure at 6ft4in, in a sweat-shirt bearing the slogan: "Help us to Stamp Out Monogamy". "Because this one happens to be a polygamist, it hits the papers a little bit harder. But child abuse is not anything out of the ordinary in the society we live in. The fact that it was in a plural marriage has got nothing to do with it."

Pam sees hypocrisy and double standards in our fear of polygamy. "People accept so many different lifestyles today; people living together, male with male, female with female, everyone going to bed with whomever they want, but they can't accept plural marriage."

It is Mocique, perhaps the most reticent of the wives, who explodes at the notion that anyone would attempt to break up their apparently happy five-some. "This is our family. He is the father of our children, he's our husband, this is our family. We have nowhere else to go. We take care of our needs, we don't bother anybody. If you met one of us on the street you wouldn't even know we were polygamist." True enough.

None of this will impress Ms Erickson, who, with two friends, is setting up a support group in Salt Lake City for women looking to escape from polygamous situations. They have named it Tapestry of Polygamy.

With all the publicity from Box Elder County, she hopes her own story will at last get some attention. Might the evil she sees at the heart of the Kingston clan finally be extinguished? The prospect is too sweet for her to put into words. Tears welling up, she simply leans back and crosses fingers on both hands.

Missile threat pushes Cyprus towards war

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

HAVE THEY or haven't they? The consensus last night was, probably not. But if Russia has, in fact, already delivered the long-promised S-300 missiles to Cyprus, then a full-scale showdown between Greece and Turkey over the divided island has moved a giant step closer.

The confusion began with a front-page article in the Russian newspaper *Sevodayny* yesterday, claiming that the state-of-the-art missiles had already been shipped, at least two months before the August or September date previously signalled by the government in Nicosia.

Greece, Cyprus and Russia all refused to comment on the report, written by the paper's highly regarded defence correspondent, Pavel Felgenhauer. "The very nature of the matter demands that the issue is kept out of the limelight," Christos Stylianides, the Cyprus government spokesman, said.

Turkey, however, which has several times announced that it would destroy the missiles if they arrived on Cyprus soil, threw cold water on the suggestion. "This couldn't have been done without our knowledge," a foreign ministry official told the semi-official Anatolian News Agency. "We are watching very closely." And on balance, experts are inclined to agree.

The missiles, fired from tubes mounted on special transporters, measure some 7m (23ft) in length. Along with the radar required to operate them, they could be ferried into Cyprus aboard a large transport aircraft. Once unloaded, however, it wouldn't be too long before someone noticed, a London-based defence analyst said yesterday.

If they have arrived, the news would dismay not only Turkey, but Britain, a guarantor power

of the 1960 treaties setting an independent Cyprus, and the United States, who all argue that they would upset an already tense regional balance of forces around the most heavily militarised island in the world.

The S-300s are as modern an air-defence weapon as they come, compared with the Patriot anti-aircraft and anti-missile system of the US. Highly mobile and reaching a speed of six times the speed of sound (Mach 6), they have a range of between 15 and 30 miles, and are effective against aircraft at altitudes of up to 100,000ft.

The question is, what military purpose do they serve? However irritating to Ankara, the missiles would not even dent Turkey's strategic superiority, ensured by 35,000 troops garrisoned in the Turkish statelet in northern Cyprus (TRNC) and by the mere 40 miles separating Cyprus from the Turkish mainland. In the event of all-out war, the Greek Cypriot two-thirds of the island would be overrun. Greece proper, by contrast, is 500 miles away.

And even unused, the S-300s are an unwanted extra ingredient to the Greco-Turkish feud, and the connected problems of disputed islands in the Aegean, the search for a Cyprus settlement, the mooted accession of Cyprus to the European Union, and Turkey's own anger at the refusal of the EU to accept its candidacy for membership.

Earlier this year, the US envoy Richard Holbrooke, architect of the 1995 Dayton accords on Bosnia, attempted to break the logjam, offering cancellation of the S-300 deal for Turkish Cyprus joining in the EU negotiations. But Rauf Denktaş, 80-year-old President of the TRNC, barely gave him the time of day.

Top Russian officials held on tax charges

By PHIL REEVES
in Moscow

RUSSIA'S top number-cruncher faces charges of fiddling his books to help big companies evade tax, after the security services found more than a \$1m in cash hidden in his Moscow apartment.

The arrests of Yuri Yurkov, head of the State Statistics Committee, and more than 20 of his subordinates, mark the biggest criminal scandal involving top officials here for months.

The timing of the arrests looks deliberate, as they coincide with a renewed attempt by the government to cajole big firms and rich Russians into paying tax, and to clean up the widespread corruption in the bureaucracy.

Low tax revenue was cited as one of the causes of the recent bout of market panic over Russia's economy which alluded to the crash of the ruble, and prompted the government temporarily to raise interest rates to 150 per cent. It is also one reason why millions of workers have been receiving wages up to 10 months late.

After keeping Mr Yurkov

and others from the committee, a Soviet-era bureaucracy known as Goskomstat, under surveillance for at least a year, the Federal Security Service (FSB) pounced on Monday night.

The FSB declared that the accused had been distorting data on large firms, allowing them to evade tax. They had also been selling information to competitors, the agency said.

Anxious to demonstrate that a purge is under way, the FSB released a videotape purporting to show more than \$1.5m in new dollar bills found in the suspects' apartments, mostly in Mr Yurkov's. A "wealth of jewels" was also found, the agency said.

Last month, President Boris Yeltsin fired the head of his tax service, replacing him with Boris Fyodorov, a former finance minister.

Yesterday Mr Fyodorov announced that he was sacking a number of corrupt officials and declared war on tax dodgers, singling out wealthy Russians and foreigners.

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

BTP goes on the acquisition trail

THE FINE chemicals group BTP which helps manufacture the latest wonder drug Viagra, is on the acquisition trail again. Its chief executive, Steve Hannam, has just paid \$54m for Hexachem of France and has purchased a string of other small businesses but says there are opportunities for more.

The company yesterday reported pre-tax profits before exceptional, up 10 per cent at £53.2m, while sales rose 8 per cent to £438.8m. They would have been better but for the high pound and South-east Asian economic woes.

Investment column, page 23



Markets buoyed by official figures

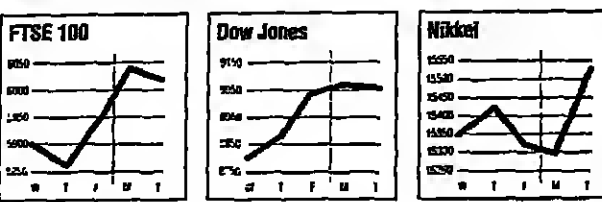
OFFICIAL FIGURES showing that British industry was technically not in recession last month was just one of the things keeping the financial markets trading water yesterday. The outcome of an informal G7 meeting and testimony from Fed

chairman, Alan Greenspan (above) are awaited today, while the Chancellor and Governor of the Bank of England will give their Mansion House speeches tomorrow, page 21

Fraud prevention firm executives quit

THE CHIEF executive and finance director of Card Clear, a fraud prevention company, have been forced to resign after the discovery late last week that they misrepresented to the board the nature of payment, page 21

STOCK MARKETS



*Dow Jones index and graph in Spain

Indices	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5019.80	-18.00	-0.36	5150.50	4392.80	3.88
FTSE 250	2982.60	-5.20	-0.17	3062.40	2384.20	3.81
FTSE 100	2929.20	-5.50	-0.19	2940.10	2141.80	3.72
FTSE All Share	2862.45	-5.65	-0.20	2872.04	2106.59	3.67
FTSE SmallCap	2787.10	-4.40	-0.16	2793.80	2182.10	2.94
FTSE Realind	1517.10	0.00	0.04	1516.50	1225.20	2.97
FTSE AIM	1142.70	-4.20	-0.37	1148.90	965.90	1.10
FTSE EBOC 100	1055.09	-0.08	-0.05			
Dow Jones	9050.42	-19.43	-0.21	9261.91	8971.32	1.57
Nikkei	15530.17	225.46	1.54	20910.79	14488.21	0.59
Hann Sent	8391.46	-155.17	-2.27	16820.31	7909.13	4.83
Dax	5760.03	-19.06	-0.33	5787.70	3467.24	2.82

INTEREST RATES

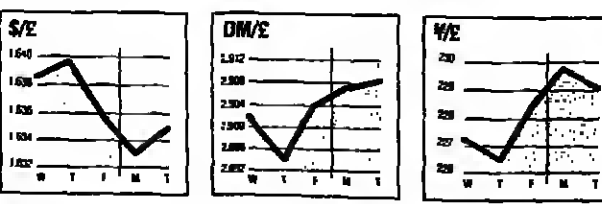


Money Market Rates	3 month	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr	1 yr
UK	7.69	1.00	7.69	0.63	5.78	-1.33	5.52
US	5.69	-0.12	5.68	-0.31	5.59	-0.95	5.80
Japan	0.54	-0.06	0.58	-0.35	1.49	-1.23	1.99
Germany	3.56	0.41	3.09	0.57	4.87	-0.92	5.43

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg	Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg
Thistle Hotels	237.50	37.00	15.45	Telewest Corpn	126	6	5
Business Post	855.00	47.50	5.58	Great Port	274.5	13	4.7
Thorn	219.50	12.00	5.78	Pacepress	915	36	4
Ladbrokes group	355.00	18.25	5.15	Stake	136	5	3.75
Inspeco Group	319.50	17.00	5.32	CGU	1168	41	3.54

CURRENCIES



Pound	at 5pm	Change	Tr. App.	Dollar	at 5pm	Change	Tr. App.
Dollar	1.5350	+0.20c	1.6356	Swedish	0.8116	-0.07p	0.8114
DM-Mark	2.9087	+0.26p	2.7913	D-Mark	1.7804	+0.19p	1.7067
Yen	229.33	-10.17	2.7913	Yen	140.26	-4.03p	112.99
£ Index	103.60	+0.00	99.00	£ Index	112.10	+0.00	101.90

OTHER INDICATORS

* at 5pm	Change	Qty	Yr Ago	Index	Qty	Yr ago	Index
Brent Oil (\$)	13.08	-0.24	17.08	GDP	114.70	2.90	111.47
Gold (\$)	292.95	-3.80	344.05	RPI	162.60	4.00	156.35
Silver (\$)	5.46	0.20	4.81	Base Rates	7.50	6.50	

www.bloomberg.com/uk source: Bloomberg

www.bloomberg.com/uk

source: Bloomberg

TOURIST RATES

Australia (\$)	2.6336	Japan (yen)	224.93
Austria (schilling)	19.76	Malaysia (ringgit)	6.2083
Belgium (francs)	58.12	Mexican (nuevo peso)	12.92
Canada (\$)	2.3183	Netherlands (guilders)	3.1716
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8244	New Zealand (\$)	3.0825
Denmark (krone)	10.79	Norway (krone)	11.88
Finland (markka)	8.6009	Portugal (escudos)	285.13
France (francs)	9.4435	Singapore (\$)	2.6682
Germany (marks)	2.8242	Spain (pesetas)	238.56
Greece (drachma)	476.12	South Africa (rand)	6.0948
Hong Kong (\$)	12.26	Sweden (krone)	12.48
Ireland (pounds)	1.1146	Switzerland (francs)	2.3495
India (rupees)	63.22	Thailand (bahts)	63.38
Israel (sheqels)	5.5004	Turkey (liras)	406209
Italy (lira)	2784	USA (\$)	1.5945

Express looks into milk-float home shopping

BY NIGEL COPE

EXPRESS DAIRIES is looking to use its fleet of 1600 milk-floats to move into the provision of services to households such as home shopping and the collection of recyclable paper.

The company, which was de-merged from Northern Foods in March, feels that home delivery will enable it to increase the use of its vans by offering additional services in the afternoons after the com-

pletion of normal morning milk rounds.

Express Dairies has held talks with major supermarket groups, food manufacturers and waste companies about linking up to provide door-to-door services. "We think that in the longer term we may have a role to play in home shopping," said Neil Davidson, the company's chief executive.

It is preparing for the expansion by offering its army of milkmen hand-held computers

that will enable them to input the details of a household's requirements. Customers will then receive itemised bills for the first time, while Express will develop a consumer database.

The company hopes to use the information to target promotional material and establish which households would be interested in additional services such as home delivery and paper collection.

Chris Haskins, the Express Dairies chairman, said "I don't

think we are looking at something in the next six months, because we have to roll out the handsets first, but it is something that we are looking at. Milk-floats, with their electric operation, are very environmentally friendly."

The initiative could well prove attractive to supermarket operators, which are becoming increasingly involved in home delivery. The stumbling block may be the size of the milk-floats, most of which are

too small to carry a full range of supermarket products to the doorstep.

Unigate held talks with a major supermarket group a couple of years ago about helping with home delivery but the talks floundered on lack of capacity. Tesco, Sainsbury and Iceland are all running home-delivery operations, but they are all using their own vans.

The comments came as Express Dairies reported a 40 per cent increase in operating

profits to £62.5m in the year to March. Mr Davidson said the doorstep delivery market was still ripe for consolidation and that the company would play its part. Express doorstep delivery sales fell by 7 per cent last year, a slower rate than previously forecast. The company expects consolidation in the doorstep delivery market and analysts said Express was more likely to take the lead role in a shake-up than Unigate, its main rival. Investment column, page 23

Thistle Hotels braced for £1.5bn takeover approach

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

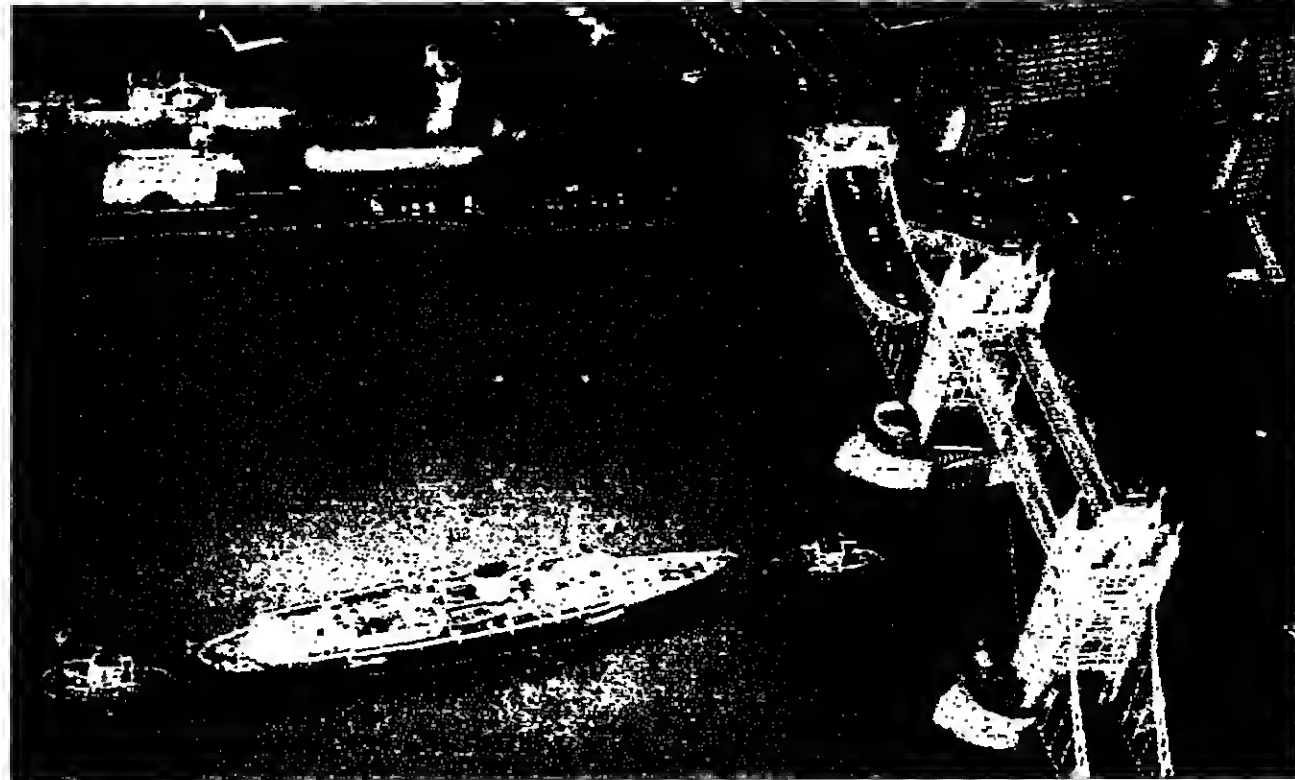
THISTLE HOTELS, Britain's second largest hotels group, increased the prospect of further consolidation in the UK market yesterday after revealing it had received several bid approaches.

Thistle, one of London's biggest hotel groups, is understood to have received at least three approaches from trade and financial buyers both from the UK and overseas. The board is now considering the approaches but may take two months to complete the process.

The group's London portfolio includes The Tower Thistle, by Tower Bridge, The Mount Royal at Marble Arch and the Royal Horseguards, off Whitehall. Most of its hotels are in the four star category.

The catalyst for the approaches is likely to have been the recent announcement by Brierley Investments, which holds a 46 per cent stake in Thistle, that it is reviewing its portfolio. Analysts had expected that this might lead to the disposal of its holding.

Thistle shares soared more than 18 per cent to close 37p higher at 237.5p valuing the company at £1.45bn. The shares were priced at 170p when the company came to the stock market in October 1996.



One of the group's top London hotels, the Thistle Tower (top right) could be heading into foreign hands

Analysts said the list of potential suitors could include a host of American operators such as Starwood Hotels and Resorts, The Blackstone Group which recently bought the Savoy Hotel group and Patriot American Hospitality. "There are structural changes going on

in the industry whereby US investors are interested in acquiring European assets" one analyst said. "So all hotel companies that have European assets are potential candidates for investment."

Financial buyers could include banks like Nomura Se-

curities which has conducted a number of major pub acquisitions by using the target's cash-flow to securitise the debt.

William Barney, head of hotel consultancy at accountants KPMG said: "These kind of organisations have been buying into other earnings-based

businesses such as motorway service areas, pubs and betting shops. Hotel businesses offer a similar earnings stream, particularly when they have a lot of London hotels."

Another possibility is interest from American real estate investment trusts (Reits) which

are attracted to the property values of British hotels group. "The US Reits and institutional buyers have hit the blue touch paper. From there you get trade buyers from the UK coming in looking to protect positions as market leaders," said John Jarvis, chief executive of Jarvis Hotels which reported a sharp rise in profits yesterday. Mr Jarvis predicted consolidation in the sector, though he said his company had received no approaches.

Thistle's statement, which prompted rises in the share prices of other UK hotels groups, marks a further step in the shake-up of the UK hotels industry. It comes just a week after Vaux, the North-east brewing and hotels group, announced it had received a takeover approach, thought to have come from Staks.

It came as Jarvis Hotels reported a 24 per cent rise in full year profits to £30m. Jarvis said it expected (benefit from structural changes under way in the UK industry.

It added that he changes would bring opportunities by making first class regional hotels available and by tempting investors.

"The prime buyers for any of these groups, particularly Thistle, will be North American who will be more interested in London than in the regions," Mr Jarvis said.

Software company founder misses out

BY TERRY MACALISTER

DR ALAN Solomon, who founded a pioneering anti-virus software business of the same name, has largely missed out on a massive £640million (£593m) sale of the company to the US.

But three executives, who bought out the husband and wife team in 1995 and have agreed to sell Dr Solomon's Group to Network Associates of California, each stand to take shares worth £1.3m after tax.

The three are chief executive Geoff Leary, financial director David Stephens and operations director Keith Perrett. Many individual staff members also will benefit from small holdings in the company.

Dr Solomon and his wife Susan who started the business from their front room made

their money in 1995 when they sold out for £30m. The sale of the company to Network Associates will still allow them to make a further £5m from the disposal of share options.

Dr Solomon himself has remained on the board of the company as a non-executive director and is hired as a consultant. He is said to have supported its sale to Network Associates which was established through the merger of McAfee and Network General late last year.

Dr Solomon, who has a PhD in Econometrics, saw the need for anti-virus software after getting involved with data recovery work.

The company has watched its share price double to £32 in the 18 months since it was first listed on both the NASDAQ

and EASDAQ stock markets.

The success has been driven by the main product, Dr Solomon's Anti-Virus Toolkit, which is sold to corporate clients in the UK and Europe.

In the nine months to the end of February, it produced operating profits of £9.6million compared to £6.1m last time while sales have soared from £25.4m to £41.5m.

Mr Leary said putting Dr Solomon together with Network Associates represented an "excellent fit in terms of products, markets and infrastructure".

Under the terms of the proposed acquisition, holders of Dr Solomon's ordinary shares will receive 0.27825 shares of Network Associates common stock for each Dr Solomon's ordinary share.



Dr Alan Solomon: missed out on £360m fortune

Severn Trent in Berlin bid

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

SEVERN TRENT, the UK water company, is bidding to take over the water supply for the German city of Berlin when the DM4m (£1.4bn) privatisation of the business takes place later this year.

Vic Cocker, the chief executive of Severn Trent, confirmed yesterday that it was interested in making a bid, possibly in conjunction with a German partner, for the operating contract to supply Berlin.

This would be the most significant overseas move by Severn since privatisation nine years ago and could pave the way for further expansion into Europe.

The Berlin Wasser Betriebs serves a population of 3.5 million people, has 6,500 employees and a capital investment programme running at about £500m a year. The Berlin city authority is looking to raise at least DM2bn by selling off 49 per cent of the business and is expected to proceed formally with the sale by this autumn.

If Severn Trent's bid is successful, it would be project-financed to a large extent, limiting the amount of direct equity that the company would have to inject.

The expansion into Berlin would form part of Severn's strategy of increasing its non-regulated earnings by 0 per cent a year over the next five to six years to offset tighter regulatory curbs on its UK water and sewerage business. However, Mr Cocker ruled out a renewed bid for another UK water company and said the company had no plans to enter either the liberalised electricity or gas markets.

He was speaking as the group announced a 4 per cent decline in profits last year out of a 10 per cent increase in the dividend. The reduction in profits from £391m to £374m was due to higher interest charges because of the windfall tax and the capital investment programme, customer rebates and a decline in revenues due to lower water usage by business customers; and the increasing number of households switching to meters.

This was offset by improved profits from the waste business Biffa and other non-regulated divisions and further reductions in operating costs.

Severn said it was ahead of its leakage reduction target set by the regulator and had not leaks by 40 per cent since 1995.

Liffe sees its future in electronic trading

LIFFE, London's futures and options exchange, yesterday voted 97.5 per cent in favour of a new system of electronic trading in a bid to hit back at its arch-rival in Germany, writes Andrew Verity.

Daniel Hodson, the chief

executive of Liffe, described the vote as "an outstanding result".

The new trading system will run alongside the system of open-outcry trading on the floor of the exchange.

Members also approved

plans to allow outside investors to buy shares in Liffe, which until now has been wholly owned by the members which operate in the market.

The market will also shift to a profit-oriented strategy. Executives at the exchange

proposed the restructuring last month after it became obvious that Liffe was losing a large chunk of its market share to Deutsche Terminbörse, the Frankfurt-based exchange which already uses electronic trading.

LONDON

After two days of strong gains blue chip shares paused for breath with Footsie easing 13 points to 6,019.8. Ladbrokes, the betting and hotel group, was the best performing Footsie constituent, spurred 19.25p higher to 355p by the approaches to Thistle Hotels. The financial sector continued to reflect takeover hopes with the recently created CGU insurance giant gaining 41p to 1,168p. Supporting shares were again in fine form with the mid cap index at a new peak. See Market Report, page 23.

TOKYO

The Tokyo stock market advanced strongly as the yen's fall against the dollar encouraged investors to buy into export-driven manufacturers. The 225-share Nikkei average soared 235.46 points, 1.54 per cent, to close at 15,530.17. It was led by companies like Sony, up 250 yen at ¥11,670, and TDK, up ¥240 at ¥10,730. The dollar rose towards ¥141 reflecting short-term capital outflows from Japan where the economy is still sluggish.

FRANKFURT

Shares recovered slightly from earlier losses as investors selectively bought into stocks after the dollar firmed against the mark, traders said. The Xetra DAX closed at 5,773.77, up 13.74 from today's floor close but down from yesterday's Xetra close of 5,787.05. The DAX closed today's floor session down 19.06 at 5,760.03. Dealers noted that trading had been thin throughout the day, with a lack of corporate news causing it to be directionless.

HONG KONG

Hong Kong stocks closed sharply lower yesterday as buyers reacted negatively to the weak Japanese yen and pessimism about China. The Hang Seng Index fell 2.27 per cent, with "China plays" suffering most. The red chip index slumped 8.52 per cent. Trading was briefly interrupted by warning of torrential rain. It snarled up the black mood of investors who marked down stocks like Shanghai Industrial by HK\$1.35 to HK\$17.80.

NEW YORK

Share prices were stable at low in late morning trade, pressured by weaker bonds and profit-taking many sectors following recent advances, dealers said. By mid morning the 30-year benchmark bond was down 8/32 at 104-19/32 yielding 5.796 per cent, pressure by concerns that Japan may soon arrange intervention to support the yen. They added that bond trading today is likely to be restrained by nervousness ahead of Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan's remarks to Congress tomorrow.

ملكو من الاصل

Building societies get cartel habit

ONCE UPON a time, there used to be something called the "building societies cartel". Every so often, the building society chiefs would sit down together and decide what their mortgage and savings rates were going to be. It was a simple and uncomplicated arrangement; everyone charged the same and everyone was happy. Then along came a new religion called competition which destroyed that cosy little world. No one would dare do that kind of thing these days, would they?

Old habits die hard, it would seem. Tomorrow, members of the Building Societies Association sit down to discuss proposals for a collective ban on mortgage redemption penalties. The effect of such a ban would be to end the sort of cashback, discounted mortgage offers that have littered the press in recent years, as well as some good value fixed rate deals.

Why would building societies want to do this? Stealing borrowers from each other by offering deals of this sort to new borrowers or those willing to remortgage their homes has become a costly zero-sum game. It began five years ago when the housing market was still depressed and lenders were desper-



OUTLOOK

ate for business and has since mushroomed. Virtually all new mortgages now carry some kind of penalty for early redemption.

Plainly if there were no such penalty, it would not be possible to offer deals like these, since borrowers would take their cash and discounts and then move onto the next lender. Alternatively, they would move to a more advantageous fixed rate the moment rates moved against them. The idea of these initiatives is to lock the borrower in.

Indeed the argument is not all black and white. It could be argued that lock-in mortgages are themselves a restrictive practice that disadvantages the borrower more

than the lender. Certainly, many borrowers don't fully understand the back-end obligations they are entering into. But don't believe that building societies are proposing this solely for the benefit of their customers. Cartels never truly die; they just hibernate.

Gotcha! Rupert bags Kelvin

KELVIN MACKENZIE must have been disappointed with stock market reaction to his abrupt departure from Mirror Group as deputy chief executive. The share price barely moved in response to this tragic loss. What? The newspaper industry's greatest living talent signs off and the City doesn't bat an eyelid? The Mirror share price may be more buoyed by bid hopes right now than any fundamental appraisal of the company's prospects going forward, but even so this really is a bit of an insult, isn't it?

Axel Springer, the German newspaper group which has been contemplating an offer for Mirror, is desperately trying to make as much out of Kelvin's resignation as it can. Plainly this affects any valuation put

on the group, its emissaries are quoted as saying. Talents like this are in short supply and Mirror Group is unlikely to get another. All to no avail. The share price sticks stoically in the mid-230s.

Axel none the less raises an interesting question - the extent to which valuations depend on the talents of one individual. Rupert Murdoch has been so rattled by recent improvements in the Mirror Group titles that, according to some accounts, he would have done almost anything to prise Mr MacKenzie away. The title of editor in chief of News International's Sun and News of the World were his for the taking. Mr Murdoch would have backed Kelvin in a flight to the moon if that had been his price for leaving. As it is, News has only had to help finance his bid for Talk Radio. Cheap at the price, it might be said.

So does his departure matter? It is the mark of a stable and professionally run company that it should be able to cope with the loss of senior executives without strain or disruption. In the creative industries it might be a bit different. Good editors can plainly make a real difference to circulation and hence the commercial prospects of their

organisations, and although Mr MacKenzie was not technically an editor at Mirror Group, he has certainly been behaving like one. Even so, if Mirror Group is as good a company as its chief executive, David Montgomery insists, it shouldn't be unduly affected by Mr MacKenzie's decision to abandon ship.

But the proof of this will be in the pudding. Axel Springer is not minded to bid any more than the present market price. That's why every time a cloud passes over Canary Wharf, the Germans claim another 10p has been knocked off Mirror's value. The onus is now firmly on Mr Montgomery to demonstrate his company is worth more. The cleanest way to do this would be through a leveraged buyout bid. But don't hold your breath. He's unlikely seriously to test the market's appetite for this until he sees the colour of Axel's money.

Silence in Euroland

IT INSISTS it is going to be accountable, but not will not publish minutes of its meetings. It will explain itself to the public at large, but has just appointed a chief

spokesman, Manfred Körber, famed for his ability to keep a firm veil over the activities of Germany's Bundesbank. This Alice in Wonderland organisation is, of course, the new European Central Bank. After the fuss about that shabby deal under which Wim Duisenberg is replaced in time with a Frenchman, Jean-Claude Trichet, and whether the ECB's credibility would suffer as a result, the latest pronouncements from Mr Duisenberg make you wonder whether Mr Duisenberg himself is not the biggest threat to the ECB's standing.

After the first council meeting yesterday, the golf-playing, country and western-loving Mr Duisenberg said the question of publishing minutes had not been discussed, but the council had nevertheless decided not to do so. He added immediately: "We are accountable to the public at large and to the European Parliament. They will be on our heels to judge what we are doing."

Too right, Wim. If ECB interest rate decisions leave some countries languishing with high unemployment and slow growth, the public will know very well where to place the blame. A shell of secrecy will be no protection against popu-

lar discontent. Quite the reverse: openness is essential for any organisation that has to take unpopular decisions. As the Bank of England is learning, it does not make you more popular, but it does give your decisions a crucial authority they would otherwise lack.

The rationale, such as it is, for the reluctance to reveal the ECB's inner workings is the fear that council members would feel compelled to vote the national line. But the solution is simply not to name names in the minutes, rather than to not publish minutes at all. The ECB will find that the kind of secrecy the German public will accept from the Bundesbank will not wash across the rest of Europe. It will not even impress the financial markets, as the ECB inspires nothing near Bundesbank-like confidence.

In trying to buck the world-wide trend towards greater transparency in policy-making, the ECB is making a big mistake. It scarcely bolstered confidence when it also announced yesterday that from July it will meet on the first Tuesday of every month to discuss interest rates; but August will be a month of rest. This is presumably to create more time for golf.



The key players. From left: Rupert Murdoch, Kelvin Mackenzie and Mirror Group's chief, David Montgomery

NI backs MacKenzie bid for Talk Radio

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

RUPERT MURDOCH'S role in the departure of Kelvin MacKenzie from Mirror Group was revealed yesterday when News International, the media mogul's UK holding company, confirmed that it would be supporting the former Sun editor's bid for Talk Radio.

Leslie Hinton, executive chairman, yesterday said that NI would be a 20 per cent shareholder in the consortium which Mr MacKenzie is putting together to make an offer for the troubled national radio station. Mr MacKenzie's move is the culmination of a campaign by NI to lure him away from the Mirror titles, where he had recently been stemming the decline in circulation since moving over from running cable channel LIVE TV five months ago.

This was in stark comparison to the Sun, where sales had been falling sharply. Last week its editor, Stuart Higgins, was ousted and replaced by David Yelland. Meanwhile, however, rattled NI executives were also devising a plan to lure Mr MacKenzie away from Mirror Group.

Mr MacKenzie is understood to have been offered a role as editor-in-chief of the Sun and the News of the World, but this was swiftly rejected.

Mr MacKenzie is believed to have been fired of working for other people, and was keen to take on a role where he could be in charge.

As a result, NI offered to back a bid for Talk. But observers say the company would have supported almost any venture that Mr MacKenzie suggested as long as it took him away from the Mirror.

"Murdoch just wanted him

News analysis: Rupert Murdoch still has a hold on key employees, even when they no longer work for him

out of Mirror Group," one insider said yesterday.

The move illustrates the hold that Mr Murdoch often continues to have on key employees, even when they no longer work for him. It also demonstrates the lengths to which he will go to stem any competitive threat to the Sun's position as the best-selling daily newspaper.

Mr MacKenzie had long been interested in the station, apparently boasting that he could do a much better job than the incumbent management. When Luxembourg Group CLT-Ufa put its 64 per cent stake in Talk Radio up for sale two months ago Mr MacKenzie was one of the many interested parties who received details of the station's financial performance from Lehman Brothers, the US bank which is handling the sale.

Media cross-ownership rules prevent NI from owning more than 20 per cent of a national radio station. However, the company's backing gave Mr MacKenzie the credibility to attract other backers.

He is being advised by Apex Partners, the group which financed Chris Evans' 88.5m buy-out of Virgin Radio. He also convinced Media Ventures International, a fund which holds 24 per cent of Talk, to hang on to its investment.

Whatever his reasons for leaving Mirror Group, however, the timing of Mr MacKenzie's departure raised eyebrows in the City. The German newspaper publisher Axel Springer is currently preparing a bid for Mirror Group and will be keen

to exploit any weakness. On Monday evening, advisers were eagerly anticipating a fall in Mirror's share price when the markets reopened. In the event, however, the shares slipped just 0.5p to 232.5p.

Accounts of Mr MacKenzie's departure differ. Some suggest that David Montgomery, Mirror Group's chief executive, found out about his plans and forced him to make a choice between the two projects. Others say the departure was more amicable, with Mr Montgomery accepting that Mr MacKenzie wanted to leave.

Mr Montgomery said yesterday: "I am really sorry to see him go, but he has a burning ambition for this project and we cannot stand in his way."

Nevertheless, City observers question the ethics of a company director pursuing private projects with support from the group's main competitor. They also wonder why Mr MacKenzie broke cover when it is far from certain that his bid for Talk will succeed.

Other competitors are still keen to take control of the station. The American group Jacor Communications and London News Radio, whose shareholders include the Daily Mail, have both submitted bids.

And yesterday Talk's management team threw its hat into the ring. Paul Robinson, the station's managing director, said he and four other senior executives were assembling a consortium to make a management buy-out bid.

"We have the inside track, we have the value and that is what

CLT is interested in maximising," he said, adding that the group was likely to submit an offer in the next few days. However, he refused to name any of the group's backers.

Mr Robinson criticised Mr MacKenzie's track record. "He has no experience of radio broadcasting. And it has to be said that LIVE TV has not been a great success," he said.

Mr Robinson denied that he or the other executives would leave Talk if Mr MacKenzie's bid was successful. "I would certainly talk to him if he approached me," he added.

Even if Mr MacKenzie succeeds in his bid, however, analysts question whether the station will ever be a success. It has struggled since its launch when it opted for a downmarket "shock rock" approach which did little to attract an audience. A subsequent relaunch has lifted listening figures and improved finances to the point where the station is set to make a small operating profit in June.

Nevertheless, Talk remains hamstrung by its £3.5m annual licence fee which keeps it permanently in the red. Although this will probably be reduced when the station renews its licence in two years' time a successful bidder would still have to support two years of heavy losses.

Most of all, observers wonder why the limelight-loving Mr MacKenzie, who was being seriously spoken of as Mirror Group's next chief executive and was being lined up for a similar role in the case of a successful Axel Springer bid, should choose a marginal radio station as his next career move.

Still, if radio does not work out he can probably ask Mr Murdoch to find him something else to do.

Building societies' move may end 'cashback' mortgages

BY ANDREW VERITY

BUILDING SOCIETIES are likely to call for the abolition of redemption penalties on all variable rate mortgages at a meeting tomorrow of the Building Societies Association.

The council of the BSA will decide whether to press for the penalties - which penalise borrowers for redeeming mortgages before a set period - to be outlawed under the new mortgage code.

If the proposal were accepted, "cashback" mortgages, which offer borrowers up to 1 per cent in exchange for a lock-in, would no longer be sold to new customers. Those fixed-rate mortgages which lock customers in after rates have ceased to be fixed would also be affected. Discounted mortgages, which

offer rates up to 1.5 per cent lower than normal for the first one or two years, would also be affected.

The BSA claims the penalties, which typically amount to 5 per cent of the remainder of the loan, confuse customers and distort competition by locking them into a particular lender - no matter what rate is offered.

A spokeswoman for the BSA said there was a question over whether it was fundamentally unfair to lock customers into a lender which was free to change its rates at any time.

"We are considering calling for a ban on all redemption fees on variable rate loans," said the spokeswoman. She added: "Is it fair that the lender can vary interest rates when the customer is locked in?"

The BSA claims many lenders are taking an up-front loss on the new mortgages, while existing savers and borrowers suffer poorer rates. They also say borrowers can suffer "payment shock" when a fixed-rate period ends and they are locked into an interest rate which could cost twice as much.

The BSA acknowledges that it will need the support of banks if the proposal is to become part of the mortgage code, which came into force on 1 May. Banks will debate the issue at a meeting of the Council of Mortgage Lenders next month.

The debate over redemption penalties comes amid an intense mortgage price war in which customers are being lured away from their lenders with the offer of discounts, cashbacks and fixed rates.

Of the £77bn lent out last year, 41 per cent was in fixed rate mortgages. Of the remaining 36 per cent in variable rates, the overwhelming majority include some form of discount or cashback.

Mortgage brokers, however, are suspicious of the BSA's moves - with one referring to it as "the thin end of the wedge of price-fixing". They fear lenders are backing away from stiff competition on the high street which has brought unprecedented benefits for the consumer.

Chris Scales, director of the Mortgage Guild, a 200-strong association of mortgage advisers, said: "We are against any form of cartel, either in price or product fixing, which could be used to the detriment of the consumer."

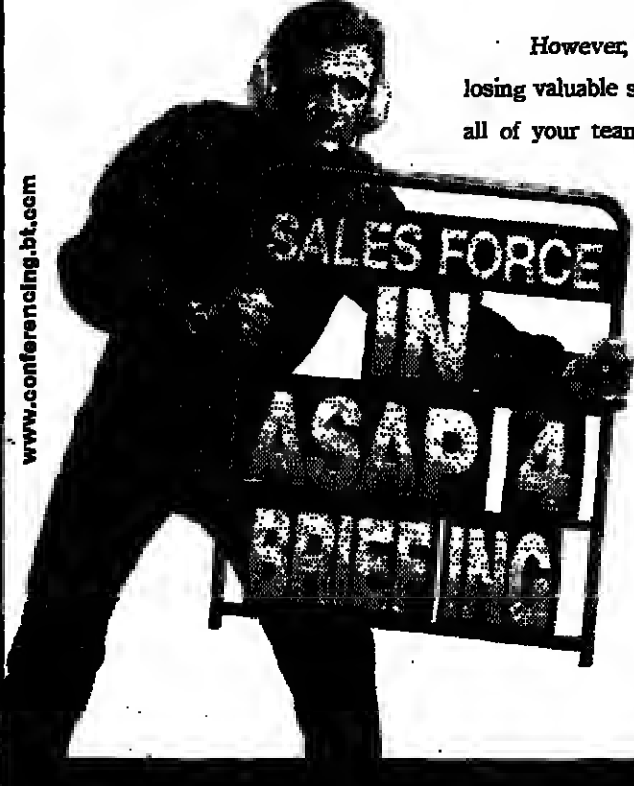
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هكذا فن الأصل

Markets hold breath as G7 meet

By DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

LIKE RABBITS frozen in a car's headlights, the financial markets stood still yesterday as they waited for the outcome of key speeches and meetings later this week.

Deputy finance ministers from the Group of Seven countries are due to finish meeting in Paris today, while Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve chairman, will give testimony to a Congressional committee this afternoon.

In London tomorrow the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Governor of the Bank of England will give their an-



Larry Summers: silent on US interest rate rise

ual Mansion House speeches, expected to set a tough tone on both the fight against inflation and government spending policy in the year ahead.

The yen remained weak against the dollar, briefly peaking at the ¥141 level before recovering in later trading. It remained below the ¥140 level, but deep pessimism about prospects for the Japanese

economy was tempered by fear that the G7 would decide to intervene to prop up the flagging currency.

The markets will also be on the alert for any signal from Mr Greenspan about the need for a US interest rate rise. But for the economic crisis in Asia the Fed would almost certainly have already increased borrowing costs.

Larry Summers, the deputy US Treasury Secretary, had no comment yesterday and insisted there would be no statement after the informal G7 meeting. But Hiko Matsunaga, Japan's finance minister, said: "We have strong worries over excessive yen weakness. We will take decisive measures as needed in co-operation with the G7 nations."

Shares in Tokyo staged a recovery yesterday, with the Nikkei index climbing 235 points to 15,530.17. Big exporters led the rise, with the weak yen expected to boost their performance.

While a US rate rise is widely expected, the uncertainty over the interest rate outlook in the UK increased yesterday with official figures showing that manufacturing had crept out of recession in the three months to April. A surge in energy output, to a record level, took growth in total industrial production even higher.

Although the unexpected rise in April, and upward revisions to earlier figures, did nothing to alter the fact that manufacturing is stagnating, they did take analysts by surprise. While most were confident until last week's shock interest rate rise that the cost



Tokyo money dealers take advantage of the quiet trading in the lead-up to key financial announcements

Reuters/Eriko Sugita

of borrowing had reached its peak, few are so sure now.

However, business surveys suggest that the outlook for industry remains bleak. Michael Saunders, UK economist at Salomon Smith Barney, said: "Manufacturing is going to weaken again."

Manufacturing output edged up by 0.1 per cent in April, and his level in March and April was also revised up. Although it remains a fraction lower than a year ago, it has climbed by 0.9 per cent in the latest three months - and therefore technically is no longer in recession.

A 7.1 per cent leap in electricity, gas and water output during April, along with a 3.4 per cent rise in oil and gas extraction, meant total industrial production rose by 1 per cent during the month to a level 1 per cent higher than a year earlier. The energy surge

is expected to prove erratic. The Office for National Statistics said the trend in manufacturing was flat while trend growth in total industrial production was 0.5 per cent.

Official figures next week for retail sales and average earnings will be seen as a more

important signal about the direction of the next interest rate move. The policy debate both inside and outside the Bank of England hinges on whether the non-manufacturing parts of the economy are slowing down fast enough to keep inflation on target.

IN BRIEF

Savings 'need risk warnings'

THE FINANCIAL Services Authority yesterday proposed that risk warnings be added to all Individual Savings Accounts which carry the Government's endorsement in a bid to stop customers "misbuying" savings policies. In a consultation paper published yesterday, the FSA said ISAs which meet the Treasury's "CAT standards" for charges and terms should carry a warning that they may not be suitable for any customer. The proposal addresses concerns that customers could "misbuy" the savings when they are introduced next April if they carry Government endorsement.

£97m airline

BRITISH REGIONAL Airlines, one of the largest regional airlines in Europe, yesterday said it expected to have a market capitalisation of £97m when it floats on the London Stock Exchange in June. The flotation will be by way of a placing of 40,673,534 new and existing ordinary shares at 150p. Dealings in the new shares are expected to start on 18 June.

Ashley changes

LAURA ASHLEY Holdings yesterday appointed Nicholas Ashley and Motoya Okada to the board as non-executive directors with effect from 9 June. They are replacing Sir Bernard Ashley and Takuya Okada who are retiring. The company also said Dino Adriano, the chief executive of J Sainsbury, will resign from the board when his two-year term of appointment expires in September.

Motor offer

REG VARDY, the UK motor retailer, is making a recommended cash offer for Trust Motor Group, on the basis of 235p in cash for each Trust share. Taken together with the special interim dividend declared by Trust on 8 May, the bid values each Trust share at 240p and values the entire issued share capital of Trust at approximately £36.0m.

Oil round open

THE GOVERNMENT has opened the 18th Seaward Petroleum Licensing Round. In a written parliamentary answer, Trade and Industry Minister John Battle said applications are now open for unlicensed acreage in the northern, central, and southern North Sea, and in the northern half of the Irish Sea, Liverpool bay and Morecambe Bay. The offer also includes exploration blocks under the "fallow blocks initiative" which has encouraged companies to hand back acreage for which they have no current plans. Closing dates for receipt of applications is 10-11 September, he said.

Waddington

IN YESTERDAY'S item about Waddington, chief executive Martin Buckley was wrongly quoted as saying he hoped for £70m proceeds from the sale of the group's cartons division. Mr Buckley did not give any indications about the likely price of the business. The group overall posted a 14 per cent increase in profit before tax and an 18 per cent increase in earnings per share, beating analysts' expectations by about £1m.

Fall in unemployment raises hopes in Germany

By IMRE KARACS
in Bonn

FOR THE first time in three years, Germany's seasonally adjusted jobless rate fell last month, raising hopes in government circles that the economic recovery is beginning to have an effect on the country's appalling level of unemployment.

According to figures re-

leased by the Federal Labour Office yesterday, adjusted unemployment fell to 4.324 million in May, the first time a decrease had been recorded since 1995.

The unemployment rate, which is based on unadjusted data, fell to 10.9 per cent, compared with 11.4 per cent in April. The number of people out of work fell by 58,360 in seasonally adjusted terms from 4.384 million in April.

The signs of improvement to the jobless figures were particularly welcome as the council of the new European Central Bank held its first meeting in Frankfurt yesterday.

Wim Duisenberg, its president, said no policy decisions were taken; but the ECB will have to co-ordinate members' interest rate decisions in the run-up to 1 January when the single currency starts. The

level of rates in Germany will have to rise, although no move is expected at the Bundesbank's council meeting today.

Though Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government saw in the figures a vindication of its policies, the labour office sounded a note of caution. "The positive jobless development in May doesn't allow us to sit back," said Bernhard Jsgoda, the labour office president. "It's

only a nice intermediate goal which we achieved."

Economists also noted that the fall in the number of jobless - the biggest in unadjusted terms for May since 1990 - was partly due to make-work schemes that have received extra funding in the run-up to September's elections.

The government would not hear of such caveats, however. "The economic upturn is now

feeding through as an increasing improvement in the labour market situation," said Günter Rexrodt, the Economics Minister. "No serious observer will now deny that we have moved through rock bottom in the labour market as well."

"I think that by the end of 1998 we will have around 300,000 fewer unemployed than a year earlier," he added. "This will mean the average unem-

ployment rate will be lower than in 1997."

The government's optimism stems from the gathering pace of economic recovery. Figures released last week showed that GDP in the first quarter of this year was 3.8 per cent more than in the corresponding period in 1997. Such growth rates have not been seen since German reunification in 1990.

Outlook, page 19

Card Clear sacks two top directors

By JOHN WILLCOCK

TWO TOP directors of Card Clear, a fraud prevention company, have been forced to resign after the discovery late last week that they "misrepresented" to the board the nature of a payment. The news wiped nearly 20 per cent off Card Clear's share price, which fell from 77.5p to 62.5p.

The company, which provides credit card fraud prevention systems to large institutions such as Amex, NatWest and Barclays, said the board is satisfied that the amount of the payment involving Brian Raven, the chief executive, and Oliver Cooke, the finance director, was "not material". The payment was "neither intended to confer, nor conferred, any personal gain on either Raven or Cooke", the company said. However, the resulting loss of confidence in the two directors made their positions untenable, it stated.

"Neither Raven nor Cooke is seeking or will receive any compensation in connection with their resignations other than the retention by them of certain share options," Card Clear added.

The company has not informed any of its regulators of

the affair because of the small size of the payment concerned, a spokesman said.

It is also highly unlikely that the company will take any legal action against the departing pair.

The company, based in Woking, Surrey, said that Nigel Whittaker, the non-executive chairman, will take over as caretaker executive chairman while it seeks replacements.

From 1983 to 1995 Mr Whittaker was director of corporate affairs at Kingfisher, the retail group. He will be supported on the Card Clear board by Barrie Brinkman, the managing director of the recently acquired information technology company HYTEC, and Steve Callaghan, the managing director of Card Clear UK.

The company also said its auditors, Coopers & Lybrand, will help in finding suitable financial management.

Under the departure terms agreed with the board over the weekend, Mr Cooke will retain one million of the 2.6 million share options granted to him under the company's executive share option scheme. Mr Raven has 568,000 founders' options over shares in the company, exercisable at 12.5 pence per share.



Disgruntled protesters unfurl a banner outside the Lloyd's annual general meeting in 1992

Lloyd's 'refuseniks' take case to appeal

By TERRY MACALISTER

THE LLOYD'S insurance market looks poised to win a fight to secure £130m it is owed by "refusenik" investors at a Court of Appeal hearing on Monday.

Leading Names - the individual investors who have traditionally supported the market - admit they are pessimistic about the chances of success. They have refused to pay money owed since October 1996 to help fund the establishment of Equitas on the grounds they did not agree with it.

Lloyd's has been forced to take out a £300m syndicated loan to finance Equitas, the reinsurance vehicle into which its liabilities prior to 1992 have been placed.

Lloyd's has already won a judgment on a "pay now, sue

later" basis against the Names, and in March Lord Justice Tuckey refused them leave to appeal.

But next week the Names will urge the Court of Appeal to let them be heard. If they win, the case will proceed immediately, but if they lose, Lloyd's will start seizing assets both here and abroad.

A Lloyd's spokesman was confident its arguments were strong, saying: "All the documentation is in place so that we can proceed with debt collection as soon as the court allows."

When the Lloyd's market was restructured two years ago there was £600m outstanding from Names who refused to pay up. So far it has collected £74m but says it never expected to bring in more than £200m of the £600m.

Mobile phone group may start service with Virgin

EUROPEAN TELECOM, the fast-growing mobile phone distributor, has held talks with Richard Branson's Virgin group about launching a mobile phone service based on the Virgin brand, writes Peter Thal Larsen.

"We've had two discussions with Virgin with regard to mobile telephony," Warren Hardy, European Telecom's chairman and chief executive, said yesterday, adding that talks were still at an early stage.

Mr Hardy said the company was looking at providing a service to Virgin in which European Telecom would purchase mobile phones from manufacturers, distribute them, and handle after-sales and repairs. The company has just won a similar

three-year contract to provide a similar service to Connect Austria, a newly licensed network operator in Austria.

Virgin has recently made it known that it is considering a move into mobile phones, and may be part of a consortium which bids for the next generation of mobile phone licences. The licences, known as Universal Mobile Telephony Services, will support high-speed data transmission, enabling users to surf the Internet and watch video on their phones. They are set to be auctioned off by the Government next summer.

Virgin is unlikely to build a new network. However, it may link up with an existing operator such as Cellnet or Vodafone

and rebrand phones which use their network with the Virgin brand.

A part in this set-up would be a boost for European Telecom, since it would receive a regular service charge for each phone it managed. The group currently earns most of its revenues by distributing phones, although it recently linked up with NatWest to offer phones which allow users to check their bank accounts.

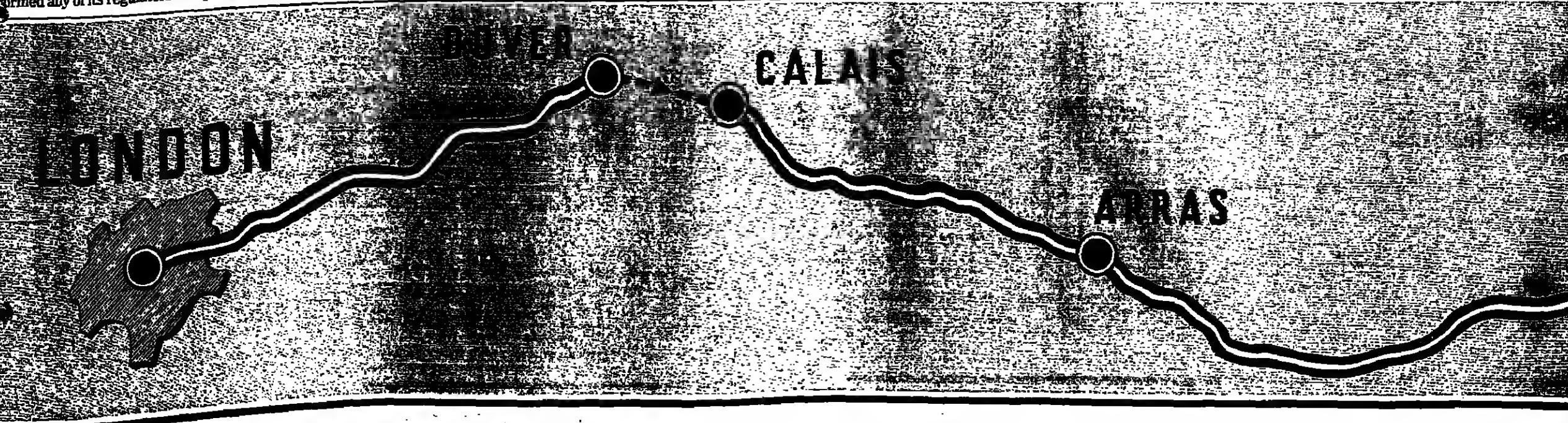
The group, which topped *The Independent* 100 list of fastest growing companies in 1997, yesterday reported a 33 per cent jump in operating profits to £6.4m for the year to last March. Revenues were up 30 per cent to £187m.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day
Anglia Group (F)	238.25m (226.25m)	24.01m (20.18m)	18.6p (16.5p)	10.0p (8.0p)	07.08.98
B&S Group (F)	229.55m (233.22m)	13.32m (12.53m)	31.9p (30.2p)	22.0p (20.5p)	31.07.98
Charles Stanley (F)	28.95m (17.35m)	4.20m (2.05m)	28.5p (13.8p)	5.0p (4.0p)	10.07.98
James Cropper (F)	54.85m (58.27m)	2.402m (5.102m)	18.1p (38.2p)	5.0p (4.7p)	14.08.98
Century Textiles (F)	23.49m (21.30m)	-3.021m (4.452m)	9.2p (1.4p)	1.50p (1.25p)	01.10.98
European Water (F)	470.29m (390.05m)	10.222m (8.752m)	13.2p (11.2p)	8.1p (6.6p)	01.10.98
European Telecom (F)	187.41m (143.80m)	5.32m (4.6m)	11.54p (10.58p)	2.1p (1.75p)	21.08.98
Express Delivery (F)	732.8m (7)	54.8m (7)	12.9p (7)	4.8p (7)	07.10.98
Firth Thomas (F)	89.39m (74.30m)	11.82m (6.48m)	5.9p (3.4p)	1.0p (0.8p)	08.08.98
Forestal Forestry (F)	14.84m (8.99m)	0.540m (0.478m)	4.2p (4.04p)	0.55p (0.55p)	20.07.98
Great Portland Estates (F)	40.38m (40.30m)	55.22m (45.02m)	8.4p (10.4p)	0.0p (0.0p)	17.07.98
H&M & Smiths (F)	135.25m (118.18m)	1.799m (1.795m)	3.40p (3.22p)	2.1p (2.1p)	25.09.98
Jarvis Hotels (F)	1.85m (1.85m)	30.0m (24.1m)	16.7p (12.8p)	4.5p (0.0p)	15.08.98
Northern Foods (F)*	1.85m (1.85m)	130.0m (128.2m)	14.28p (16.13p)	10.4p (8.4p)	01.10.98
Parasol (F)	253.24m (255.55m)	-30.57m (10.01m)	-14.45p (5.58p)	2.55p (2.55p)	10.09.98
Servus Trust (F)*2	1.25m (1.21m)	374.0m (355.5m)	4.3p (3.7p)	38.7p (32.5p)	08.04.98
Ray Werry (F)	824.4m (877.0m)	19.4m (16.8m)	24.0p (21.7p)	8.25p (7.50p)	01.10.98
Wessex Water (F)*3	286.0m (254.3m)	139.0m (145.8m)	3.7p (3.2p)	20.0p (18.0p)	01.09.98
Yates Brothers (F)	97.78m (75.75m)	13.8m (10.54p)	18.8p (14.3p)	3.45p (2.88p)	02.01.98

*1 = A Foods-figures before takeover of Express Delivery; *2 = Servus Trust-Schmiedemann of West die by 1.25p to reflect delay in payment until 06.04.98; *3 = Wessex Water-27p on current figs, before utility has 58.5p

(F) = Final (I) = Interim EPS is pre-exceptional. Dividend to be paid as a FD



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(TCM) Y/ 5k kg		94.80
(CTN) S/50k lb		74.70
(KLC) S/25 tn		2311.00
(CBT) S/60k lb		25.78
(TCM) S/500kg		1255.00

Benson and Hedges semi-finals: Batsmen hold sway as Leicestershire and Essex reach Lord's

Maddy makes Surrey suffer

BY DEREK PRINGLE

Leicestershire 311
Surrey 291-8
Leicestershire win by 20 runs

SURREY, THE winners of last season's Benson and Hedges Cup, will not be going to Lord's. Instead it will be Leicestershire and Essex who will meet on 11 July to contest the final Benson and Hedges Cup final.

On a gusty day, the holders were soundly beaten by Darren Maddy, whose unbeaten century gave the home side's total of 311 an impregnable Surrey never looked like challenging until Adam Holoake's late flurry momentarily quietened the premature celebrations.

It was game effort by Holoake senior, whose 85 from 95 balls gave a one-sided game some late piquancy. Earlier his bowling figures of 8-0-76-0, after he had won the toss, made almost fictional reading. To get within 20 runs was something not many contemplated when the visitors were 201 for 6 with 10 overs to go, and it needed a fine yorker by his opposite number, Chris Lewis, to get rid of him.

The semi-finals of any knockout cup are normally begrudging affairs. Sides are expected to give no quarter in the bid for further glory in front of a full house at Lord's. Yesterday,

Surrey's cricket was so full of calamity and error that you half expected Stuart Hall to be doing the commentary and not the Sky team.

Maddy, the home side's champion with an unbeaten 120 from 138 balls, was particularly grateful for Surrey playing their joker(s) - about four of them as it happened. Twice dismissed off no-balls, the first when he was on 53, Maddy continued his stellar form in this competition.

Messed about by England in the recent Test series - he was given one match against South Africa, batting in the middle-order - the stocky right-hander averages 156 from his seven innings this season, including three centuries. That his latest was played out in front of England's one-day captain must have been particularly satisfying.

It was not a one-man show, however, and the home side were indebted to both to Lewis and Ben Smith, who, if anything, outplayed Maddy while the pair added 172 for the second wicket. Indeed, only the Holoakes were able to match the pair's crisp array of strokes after Lewis, claimed three quick wickets, including Surrey's England trio.

As expected against his old club, Lewis's gestures were extravagant and when he had bowled the final ball, he went down on bended knee. It will be the first time Leicestershire

have contested the B&H final since 1985, and he was doubtless thanking someone higher being other than Maddy for getting them there.

For once, winning a useful toss proved to be a double-edged sword. Deciding to put the home side in, Holoake had not reckoned on the effect the strong wind would have on his bowlers, who were huffed to the extent that line and length were the exception rather than the rule.

The loss of Ian Salisbury, who tore his groin with the first ball he bowled - he will be out for at least a month and had considered not playing after apparently feeling a twinge earlier - did not help matters as Surrey had one of those days in the field best forgotten.

Under Holoake, Surrey have long claimed to be a team without frontiers. Yesterday, they came across a team who dared to raise a barrier and then hold it firm.

New Zealand are to bring in a third spinner, Mark Priest, to join Daniel Vettori and Paul Wiseman for the third and deciding Test against Sri Lanka starting in Colombo today. Priest could take the place of the left-arm paceman Shayne O'Connor on a pitch expected to favour slow bowlers. The Sri Lankans, who levelled the series in Galle, have indicated they plan to use three spinners.

Hussain's golden touch wins day

BY JON CULLEY

Essex 258-7
Yorkshire 163
Essex won by 95 runs

ESSEX MAY not be quite the daunting force they once were but, having upset the odds by beating Warwickshire to collect the NatWest Trophy last September, they are going to Lord's again next month with designs on landing the Benson and Hedges Cup in its final year.

After a grim weather forecast, it always seemed likely that rain would play some part, but mercifully the contest escaped with only two stoppages before Robert Rollins's stumping of Ryan Sidebottom completed a 95-run victory for Essex at 6.56pm as Yorkshire were bowled out for 163 in 42.4 overs, losing their last six wickets for 50 runs.

Essex arrived here as underdogs and relished the experience, just as Nasser Hussain, the acting captain while Paul Prichard recovers from shin splints, had predicted.

Indeed, no one revelled in it more than Hussain himself, who put the personal disappointment of an unlucky Edgbaston Test behind him to lead the side to the brink of victory

by producing the day's key individual performance, which earned the Gold Award.

Hussain's mature, measured 78 - undisturbed by a collision with Yorkshire's wicketkeeper, Richard Blakey - enabled Essex to recover from a calamitous start after David Byas had won the toss and decided to bowl first following the tireless work of the groundstaff to mop up following Monday's deluge and ensure an 11 o'clock start.

Hussain had seen Darren Robinson leg before wicket to the first ball of the match and watched with growing pessimism as strike bowlers Chris Silverwood and Paul Hutchison combined to reduce Essex to 33 for 3 in eight overs, making light of the absence of the injured Darren Gough.

But with Rounie Irani offering valuable support, Hussain decided there was no point in being negative and a partnership of 83 in 18 overs gave Essex a platform on which Paul Grayson and Danny Law were able to make the most significant additions, Law putting on 56 in the last four overs in an unbroken partnership with Ashley Cowan.

There was some life in the wicket to reward accurate bowling and Sidebottom, the fourth member of a

Yorkshire pace quartet and their leading AXA League bowler, justified his inclusion ahead of spinner Richard Stamp by undoing Irani with extra bounce and later trapping Hussain in front as the England player, who had by then faced 122 balls and gathered six boundaries, attempted to work the ball off his legs.

But the more effective bowling came from the less daunting but more disciplined Essex attack, whose early successes matched those of Yorkshire as the home side slipped to 29 for 3 in their first eight overs.

Darren Lehmann and Anthony McGrath plotted a Yorkshire recovery but their progress was slow as Essex applied the brake and the asking rate was always eluding them.

During one frustrating passage, Yorkshire failed to take a run off the bat for 24 deliveries as the negligently accurate Irani bowled consecutive maidens, sandwiching one by Peter Such.

Crucially, Such then had Lehmann caught behind before Grayson, whose left-arm spin yielded three wickets in his eight overs, bowled McGrath, who batted for 105 minutes in making a rather inadequate 39.



Venus Williams: 'I would like to make a firm statement. I didn't play at Wimbledon last year. I was never there'

Peter Jay

Venus has memory lapse

Venus Williams is into fantasy tennis. "I'm looking forward to Wimbledon," she said, "especially as it's my first visit". Actually Venus made her debut at the All England Club 12 months ago but failed to make a lasting impression.

She won't talk about the experience because, she maintains, it didn't happen. "I would like to make a firm statement. I didn't play at Wimbledon last year. I was never there."

In a way she's right. She didn't play, at least not to the level of a girl who is supposed to do to women's tennis what Tiger Woods has done to golf.

This time Venus has arrived in London early in preparation for the Big One. Yesterday she was at the Roehampton Club, the Bel Air of the home counties, with her mother Oracene and they are already fed up to the teeth with the British summer.

"I have been sleeping, eating and watching the rain," Venus said. And watching lots of television, with the cartoon channel high on the remote control.

Tim Glover on the girl expected to do a Tiger Woods to women's tennis but still waiting to make her mark at Wimbledon

After losing to Martina Hingis in the quarter-finals of the French Open last week, the Williams' went shopping in Paris. They weren't even sure who contested the final. Venus, who is 17 (she's not wearing blue jeans), is 6ft 2in and has a grip like Lew Hoad.

It takes her five hours to do her hair which is braided with 1,800 blue and white beads. There is gold jewellery everywhere and about the only thing that isn't gold is the silver brace on her teeth.

The mother and daughter act is a bit of a laugh, a bit of a tease until Oracene, who has another gifted daughter, Serena, gets into the issue of race and sport.

Her husband Richard, she said, was a professional golfer and basketball player. "It was tough for him in the Fifties. They burnt his car

and he was not allowed to in certain clubs. He decided to quit. If my daughters hadn't been trained the proper way they wouldn't have had an opportunity in tennis."

"Other African-Americans are having a hard time. It isn't fair. Everyone should be given the opportunity to be the best but it's set up to keep the minority out. The sport could be taken to a different level, like in basketball. It's not enough for us to succeed. I'd like to see more African-Americans on the circuit. I don't have time for trivia and ignorance."

Oracene expected Venus Ebony Star as she calls her, to get to the top because of "innatubility". "She doesn't have to do anything. There has never been any pressure to succeed. She has a balanced life."

Venus, who is in action in Eastbourne next week, says that grass doesn't bother her. "I enjoy every surface. You have to have a plan. My mind is set on winning Wimbledon. You can play great tennis for a fortnight and the next thing you know you have a Grand Slam tournament in your pocket. I have been there a little bit. I know how to win."

"I intend to be the best person everyday. I want my life to stay simple. I don't want people to look up to me and think that I'm not a real person. In the past I've been labelled an introvert. Now they think I'm an extrovert. We will continue to have fun."

Venus will not, however, be hitting Planet Hollywood when she turns 18 on 17 June. "As a Jehovah's Witness I don't celebrate birthdays." Her religion, she says, explains why she is so "well behaved".

Except when it comes to the question of Wimbledon '97. "I have played in just five Grand Slam events. Make that four. We didn't come to England last year."

Philippoussis blown off course

BY BARRY NEWCOMBE

at Queen's Club

SOME TALL poppies fell in the wind at the Stella Artois championships at Queen's Club yesterday with the distraught defending champion, Mark Philippoussis, 6ft 4in, Sander Stolle, 6ft 4in, Todd Martin, 6ft 6in, and Andrew Richardson, 6ft 7in, failing to pass the first round.

Philippoussis, the ninth seed, was so concerned at his 7-6, 7-5 defeat by the Spaniard Jordi Burillo that he is considering missing Wimbledon: it would relieve a number of players if he did. He telephoned his father in Melbourne after the match and emerged from that discussion to say that he is expecting to fly to Florida, where he has one of his three homes, to re-think his Wimbledon situation there.

Philippoussis said: "This year has been pathetic for me and I have just not been there at all. I am confused in my tennis. It is like I am not hungry any more. I don't know what is happening out there, it is not a great feeling."

If Philippoussis does play at Wimbledon, he is not sure to be seeded, his chances of being listed among the

elite depending on charity. His world ranking suffered yesterday along with his confidence but he could still emerge at Wimbledon as a dangerous floater. He is one of the fastest servers in the world and Burillo, one of 17 Spaniards in the top 100, knew it was his day when Philippoussis missed two set points in the tie-break and double-faulted to lose it.

Stolle, whose father Fred could be seen playing his trade on these same

courts more than 30 years ago, was beaten in a close finish by Chris Wilkinson, whose 7-5, 3-6, 7-5 victory made him the third British player to reach the second round after Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski, who face Sargis Sargsian of Armenia and Jerome Golmard of France.

Stolle served for the match at 5-4 against Wilkinson, who was angered by some of the line calls when he dropped his serve in the ninth game.

The break could have proved decisive but Wilkinson clung on in the wind, denying Stolle a match point. Wilkinson, after arguing his case unsuccessfully when the umpire overruled a call in his favour at the start of the final game, won on his second match point when Stolle double-faulted.

Wilkinson, who has three times reached the third round at Wimbledon, was last night given a wild card to this year's championships along with three other British players, Richardson, Mark Petchey, and Denny Sapsford, and the 18-year-old Marat Safin, the Muscovite who, as a qualifier, reached the fourth round of the French Open.

Petchey was beaten 6-3, 6-3 yesterday by the Texan Alex O'Brien and Richardson faded in the final set against Daniel Nestor of Canada, who won 6-4, 2-6, 6-1. Todd Martin, the 1994 champion, was beaten 6-4, 6-2 by the Swiss Ivo Heuberger, who lost his first set in qualifying 6-0 and has never looked back.

The five wild cards awarded in the Wimbledon women's singles are all to British women - Samantha Smith, Karen Cross, Lorna Woodroffe, Julie Pullin and Jo Ward.

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

BENSON AND HEDGES CUP SEMI-FINALS

LEICESTERSHIRE V SURREY

Leicestershire bat Surrey by 20 runs.

Surrey won toss

LEICESTERSHIRE

1 J L Maddy not out	120
2 J L Maddy not out	89
3 B F Smith st Stewart b Sadiq	40
4 P M Simmons b B C Holoake	17
5 A P Nixon run out	39
6 C C Lewis not out	31
7 Total (for 5, 50 overs)	311
8 Did not bat: J V Wells, A Habib, J Ormond, A J Mullaly, O Williamson	

SURREY

1 A O Brown run out	3
2 A J Stewart c Simmons b Lewis	21
3 B C Holoake c Lewis b Ormond	63
4 G P Thorpe c Nixon b Lewis	2
5 M A Butcher hit wicket b Lewis	85
6 A J Holoake b Lewis	41
7 J O Ractiff st Nixon b Simmons	41

M P Bicknell not out	38
Sadiq Hussain run out	17
J E Benjamin not out	1
Extras (b5 r6 w7 nb8)	1
Total (for 5, 30 overs)	73
Falls: 1-4-2 30-3-72 4-73-5-113 6-193 7-274	
Did not bat: I D K Salisbury	
Surrey won toss	
Yorkshire	
1 D J Robinson lbw b Silverwood	0
2 S G Law c Parker b Silverwood	10
3 N Hussain lbw b Sidebottom	78
4 R J Rollins c Hamilton b Hutchison	3
5 R C Irani c Blakey b Sidebottom	39
6 A P Grayson c McGrath b White	24
7 S O Peters run out	17
8 B F Cowan not out	36
9 A P Cowan not out	15
10 Extras (b6 r6 w10 nb3)	30
Total (for 7, 50 overs)	258
Did not bat: M C Flett, P M Such	

Bowling: Silverwood 7-0-45-2; Hutchison 7-0-38-7; Hamilton 9-0-30-5; White 8-0-41-1; Lewis 10-0-42-3; Vaughan 10-0-43-0.

YORKSHIRE

M P Vaughan lbw b Cowan	0
C Wince not out	1
0 Blyse c Peters b Rolt	13
0 S Lehmann c Rollins b Soth	40
0 S G Law c Grayson b Sidebottom	10
6 P Parker lbw b Grayson	20
10 G M Hammond b S G Law	10
6 M C Hammond b S G Law	20
6 P M Hutchinson not out	6
R J Sidebottom st Rollins b S G Law	4
4 Extras (b1 b4 w24 nb4)	18
Total (for 10, 50 overs)	135
Falls: 1-0-2 10-4-23 4-99 5-172 6-118 7-176	

Bowling: Cowan 10-1-33-1; Rolt 10-0-22-2; Irani 7-2-21-0; Soth 8-1-34-1; Grayson 8-0-22-1; Sidebottom 10-0-22-1; White 10-0-22-1.

Umpires: B Leadbeater and P Willey.

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Norway's coach has confounded the critics of his long-ball approach with a string of impressive warm-up results

Olsen extols order of the boot

Morocco made in new mould by Michel

BY PHIL SHAW

EGIL OLSEN never did set much store by conformity. This is a man who used to zip around his workplace on roller skates and espouses left-wing views in a largely right-wing sport. But what really marks Norway's manager down as idiosyncratic, at least in the context of the World Cup, is his belief in the viability of the long-ball game.

To hear Olsen extol the virtues of "the penetrative way of playing" is to be transported back to the mid-1980s. To a time when Watford and Wimbledon terrorised defences with their direct approach. When indignant guardians of the beautiful game demonised those who championed concepts like the POMO (position of maximum opportunity, aka the far post).

In the Premiership, where 30 Norwegians earn their living at clubs like Liverpool, Manchester United, Chelsea and Leeds, such methods and theories are outmoded, not to say discredited. If employed at France 98, where they open against Morocco tonight, they would almost certainly make Norway the only ones in step.

Olsen, who leaves his post after the finals and has been linked with everyone from Celtic to Switzerland, has no qualms about being different. He is confident that work-rate, athleticism and organisation – the basic values which Jack Charlton exploited to raise the Republic of Ireland's profile in international football – can take Norway through to the second phase for the first time.

In the United States four years ago, they finished bottom of the so-called Group of Death, despite gaining as many points as the Irish, Italy and Mexico. They are in a strong-looking section again, with Brazil – whom Olsen calls "the best team in the world" despite Norway's stunning 4-2 victory over the bolder in a friendly last summer – plus Scotland and the Moroccans.

"Scotland will be something like Ireland," he anticipates, "and Morocco are a very strong African team. We beat Brazil and they were very eager to take revenge. They invited us over there but we couldn't go. It's difficult to visit the other side of the world for a friendly. But I know that Brazil in the World Cup is a very different matter."

"Everything is concentrated on qualifying from the first stage. I can't imagine that Brazil won't get through, so it's between the other three for one place."

When Plaza A failed at USA 94 there was no Plan B, but Olsen is unrepentant. "I don't think we'll do things very differently from last time. I believe we did things right, although we're aware that we didn't play well. What we did wasn't good enough, but the beat had something to do with that. We played in about



Egil Olsen prepares his squad: "Many goals are conceded by losing the ball in midfield. If you don't play it there you won't lose it. It's simple!"

Allsport

30 degrees in the first match. After that we were empty. Due to our style of play we were penalised very hard. We run and move a lot."

Even in flaming June, France should be more to their liking. Olsen looks to have a better squad than last time – in Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and Tore Andre Flo they have palpably superior strikers – while critics who argue that such talents require more sophisticated tactics have been disarmed by Norway's stunning qualifying and friendly results.

Olsen, who lectures at Oslo's University of Sport and Physical Education when not working with the national squad, also finds vindication in academic research. Renowned for a fondness for statistics, he has studied data from all over the world

in an attempt to analyse how, why and when goals are scored.

An English scientist called Richard Pollard, who now works in America, has been particularly influential. Pollard reputedly collaborated with Wing-Commander Charles Reep, who invented the acronym POMO and was cited as an inspiration by Graham Taylor for his statistically-based endorsement of "route one" football.

"Reep is in his nineties now," says Olsen, "but he's still bright. I've spoken to him on the phone and he has written me 20-page letters."

A combination of their analyses and his own experience has led him to the conclusion that "the penetrative way is more effective than the possession way".

It is an extraordinary statement which flies in the face of the global game's conventional wisdom. "I haven't seen any [international] team playing like us," he adds proudly, defiantly. "We're special. We're playing a very strict zonal defence. More so than in England where they mark and follow opponents more than we do. They're going in the opposite direction, with more possession and more passes. But the way we play is exciting."

"I like being called a long-ball team. It means nobody will imitate us. The long ball is only a small part of my philosophy. But if you don't play the ball through the midfield, you won't lose it there. Many goals are conceded by losing it there. It's simple!"

When he starts to eulogise the dozen of direct play, the FA's former head of coaching Charles Hughes, one suspects it might be an elaborate piece of kidding designed to wrong-foot the Scots. But no, this really is the Norwegian way, right down to the old Graham Taylor ploy of using a tall player out wide and aiming diagonal balls at him like some Nordic Ian Ormrod.

The irony of Olsen's stance is that he was evidently a skilful player, famed for his dribbling prowess. Now, suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and fitted with an artificial hip, he cannot play at all. Before the operation he worked in a college with long corridors. Hence the roller skates, no problem for one who played ice hockey as a child.

The political radicalism stems from a working-class background and his student days in the 1960s. "For some reason, if you're on the left, the press are interested. Though I'm not so active now, I did get involved in the debate over whether we should go into Europe. We won that fight – 51 per cent of Norwegians said no."

He does like a statistic, but the mental image of Olsen as the nerdy huffin poring over Reep's missives is belied by the sight of him supervising training in his Wellingtons on a cold, rain-swept day. "I mustn't get my feet wet because I'm rheumatic. They're effective."

A non-conformist down to his toes, Egil Olsen brings a whole new meaning to the idea of the big boot.

ANYONE OUTSIDE north Africa or Scandinavia might think there is only one World Cup match today, but while Brazil versus Scotland is the main event Norway's match with Morocco is arguably the more vital game.

With Brazil favourites to win Group A, the real contest is for second place and the meeting in Montpellier will reveal immediately whether Morocco have a chance of upsetting the odds.

Norway, unbeaten at international level since January 1997, have had an enviable build-up, with impressive recent victories over Denmark, Mexico and Saudi Arabia.

That run has enabled the coach, Egil Olsen, to name his starting line-up early last night and, with a fully-fit squad, confidence in the camp is high. Olsen's only problem seems to be keeping Norwegian optimism in check. "We're not as good as our results suggest," he said. "The results have been better than some of the performances and we know that we are not the best side in the world."

Brazil earned that title four years ago but came unstuck against Norway in Oslo last year, losing 4-2.

Olsen gives his team a "20 per cent chance" of repeating that victory in the final group match but he hopes to have secured second place by then, with wins over Scotland and Morocco.

The Chelsea forward Tore Andre Flo, who scored twice against Brazil, will lead the Norwegian attack and his strength in the air will pose a formidable threat to Morocco.

The Morocco coach, Henri Michel, had his squad playing "head only" football during training this week but insisted it was not a special preparation for Norway's aerial menace. In fact, in their captain Nourredine Naybet, Morocco have a gifted centre-back more than capable of competing with the gangling Flo. He has recovered from a twisted ankle and will play, as will Moustafa Hadji, Morocco's midfield fulcrum. Badji has a broken toe but insisted he will play through the pain "to bring glory to Morocco".

There was little of that on display four years ago when Morocco lost all three first-round games. However, Michel, who led France to the semi-finals in 1986, has revolutionised the team, adding what he described as "British-style discipline" to the abundant talent.

The result is a side that is defensively sound with the ability to break with skill and speed.

Michel well knows that the first match will be vital. "We need a result of some sort," he said. "A win would be ideal but a draw would keep us in the hunt for second place."

WHO THE PUNDITS PICK

BRAZIL

Alan Hansen, Gary Lineker, Barry Davis, Jimmy Hill (all BBC); Andy Gray, Alan Parry, Alan Mullery (all Talk Radio); Martin Samuel (Daily Express); Glenn Moore (The Independent); David Baddiel (comedian); David Ginola.

FRANCE

Jack Charlton; John Motson, Alan Green (both BBC); Kevin Keegan (ITV); Brian Madley (Sunday People).

ARGENTINA

Terry Venables; Henry Winter (The Daily Telegraph).

ENGLAND

Bob Wilson (ITV); Harry Harris (The Mirror).

THE NETHERLANDS

Brian Moore (ITV); Rob King (Daily Star).

ITALY

Des Lynam (BBC); Richard Littlejohn.

GERMANY

John Inverdale (BBC).

Nigeria's harmony a real bonus for Ikpeba

WHEN GLENN HODDLE complains about the obstacles that litter his path as England coach, he is probably thinking of the intense media scrutiny of his preparations, and the wrangling he has gone through with the likes of Alex Ferguson and Roy Evans to secure his players for friendly games.

But while clearly no picnic, the trials and tribulations that come with Hoddle's job pale into insignificance when compared with the employment terms of his Nigerian counterpart, Bora Milutinovic.

Denied top quality warm-up matches by sporting sanctions in force against the military regime and the country's suspension from the Africa Nations Cup, it was not until 22 April that Milutinovic was finally able to get his key players together for a friendly, against Germany.

Although that resulted in an honourable 1-0 defeat, last week's 4-0 humbling at the hands of Grasshopper Zurich certainly increased the pressure on the experienced Serbian coach, that he is the fourth

man to hold the job in the time of Hoddle's England tenure tells you all you need to know about the post's longer term prospects, and the politicking that is an inevitable part of the Nigerian football scene.

But despite these handicaps, and an on-going row between the players and the national federation over the non-payment of their agreed qualification bonuses, hopes remain high back home that the Super Eagles will swoop to the World Cup in France, and fulfil, at the last opportunity, Pelé's oft-quoted prediction that an African nation would be world champions by the turn of the century.

To find the reasons for that optimism, you need to go back to Atlanta two years ago, when the bulk of the current squad won Olympic gold in spectacular fashion, including dramatic

ic victories over Argentina and Brazil.

"Since Atlanta, a lot of Nigerians think we have already won the World Cup, especially considering that the team that won there forms the basis of our current side," acknowledges the striker Victor Ikpeba, a gold-medallist and current African footballer of the year. "The whole country is very excited and confident."

"In the States we beat Brazil, who had Ronaldo, Roberto Carlos, Bebeto and Juninho in their team, so you cannot blame the people for feeling that way, but the players are not getting carried away. But we believe that we can win, because we are a stronger now than we were in the last finals four years ago."

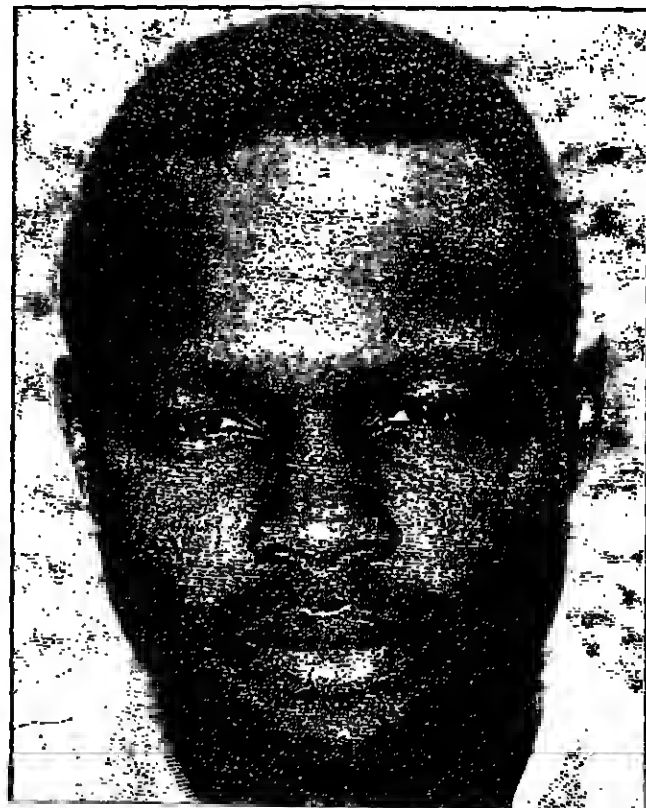
Then, Nigeria were eliminated in the second round by Italy after leading 1-0, and Ikpeba

feels the lessons of that day have been fully absorbed. "We are mentally tougher now, and appreciate the need to keep going all the way through. In Atlanta, we were 3-1 down against Brazil in the semi-finals, with 15 minutes to play, trailed twice before winning. This tells you a lot about the spirit we now have in the team."

When you add to that newly acquired strength the talents of players such as the Internazionale striker Nwankwo Kanu, back in the squad after career-threatening heart surgery, silky playmakers Austin Okocha and Ikpeba himself, it is clear that the optimism is not purely fanciful.

But if the pedigree of the bulk of the Nigerian squad is beyond question, it may be events off the field that will clip the Eagles' wings. The row over bonuses, for one, has hardly done much for dressing-room harmony.

"We didn't need that problem," says Ikpeba. "Money is not the reason we are going to France, but we were promised the bonuses for qualifying,



Victor Ikpeba: "We are mentally tougher now" Allsport

which in any case are far smaller than those the European teams have received. It's just typical of Nigeria that the money hasn't been paid, and it would be a big help if it were resolved before the competition started."

And then there is the small matter of the regular changing of the man at the helm. The previous incumbent, Frenchman

Philippe Troussier, was sacked after a row with the federation despite having led the Eagles through their qualifying group. "It's a shame that the federation keeps changing the coach, but there is not a lot of players can do about it. At least Bora is well experienced and that makes him a good man to have on our side."

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The Tartan Army – famous for drinking dry host towns and cities – appears to have drained Scotland of French francs. An estimated \$5m worth of French currency has been snapped up in the last few days, promising a bonanza for bar owners across the channel. A spokeswoman for Thomas Cook said Scotland broke all the records when francs were sold commission-free at the weekend. The Herald, Glasgow.

George Vecsey, a veteran sports columnist with the New York Times, reports

THE GLOBAL GAME

THE WORLD CUP AROUND THE WORLD

that the US team have a special problem ahead of Sunday's match in Paris against Germany. Billed in a chateau in the Beaulieu region, they are battling boredom. "The Yanks are grumbling here out in the countryside," Vecsey writes. "Our lads do not like being quartered in the boonies." Al-

though they are in deepest wine country, US team members are allowed only one beer at dinner by coach Steve Sampson. Other distractions on offer to them: a darts board, late night card games and, says Vecsey, exciting volumes of the "pages jaunes" in every room.

Bild Zeitung, Germany's leading tabloid, remarks on the transformation of Berti Vogts, the national team coach. "In France he wants to achieve as manager what he pulled off as player in 1974 – winning the World Cup in England two years ago, he was the fatherly friend of players, who would even interpose in disputes between Klinsmann and Sammer. They thanked him with their triumph at Wembley. Now the boss is acting tough. He plays one off against the other, even with the help of the media."

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Rio just glad of second chance

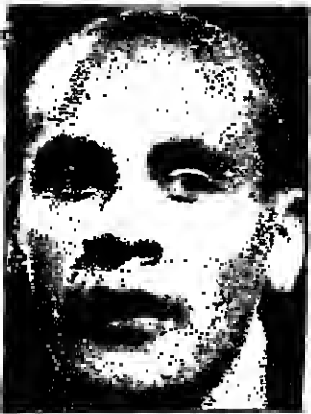
BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM

RIO FERDINAND has grown used to being compared to Bobby Moore by now. After all, he is 19.

The West Ham defender, the second youngest member of England's World Cup squad, has already endured years of being told that his assured yet delicate style is reminiscent of the fair-haired legend who used to inhabit the same Upton Park domain.

Ferdinand has the good grace to be embarrassed. "Bobby was a legend like Pele. Players like him are a one-off. I'm only at the beginning of my career and I find it hard even being put alongside someone as great as him."

For all that, as Ferdinand has worked his way up through the ranks at West Ham, something about him has always stood out as being special. It is a quality which was recognised two years ago by Glenn Hoddle's predecessor as England coach, Terry Venables, who invited the 17-year-old along to train with England's Euro 96 squad.



Ferdinand: Embarrassed

Two years on, Ferdinand finds himself alongside the established names in a more meaningful way. "It's unbelievable," he said.

Unbelievable it wasn't, but it did seem unlikely just nine months ago when, having been called up for the World Cup qualifier against Moldova, Ferdinand was dropped in the wake of a drink-driving charge. He had attended a party on the day before he was breathalysed, but the alcohol was still in his system and he was over the legal limit. Given the disciplinary character of the England coach - a characteristic that has been vividly demonstrated as he has sorted through his difficulties first with Paul Gascoigne and then Teddy Sheringham - Ferdinand feared the worst after his misjudgement. "I thought to myself 'I'm not going to play for England'. I didn't even think about the span of time." The incident is something over which Ferdinand is still very touchy.

Asked if he felt, in retrospect, whether it had been a good thing that his bad habit should have been brought to light and dealt with at an early stage in his career, his composure was clearly ruffled. "What do you mean 'bad habit'?" He made it very clear that this had been a one-off mistake which had caused him considerable discomfort. "It was a bit of a shock when I saw the story in all the papers although I suppose I should have expected it. It was a big embarrassment - not just for myself but for my family and friends. For my little brother."

"But Glenn reassured me by saying that it wouldn't affect me in the long run if I could deal

Chelsea Ros



On the way at last: The England party board their flight from Heathrow to France yesterday

with it and carry on doing well on the pitch. He said I could come back a stronger person and that it would work in my favour, and that's what I feel has happened. Perhaps it was a good thing to learn so early in my career."

That period of self-examination marked a low point in Ferdinand's England ambitions, but he remained uncertain of his place in the World Cup squad until he was actually

told by Hoddle that he was included. When Hoddle failed to name him in the starting line-up of three successive warm-up matches, Ferdinand once again questioned whether he would get to France. "When I wasn't chosen for the Belgium game I thought: 'I can't be going then' but I went on as a substitute and was told I'd done reasonably well."

Well enough to get the nod from Hoddle in La Manga after

he had made the lonely walk to the coach's hotel room which all 28 players had to endure. "I thought I had half a chance," Ferdinand said. "It was 50-50. There was no beating around the bush, Glenn just said 'you're in'."

"Just had a big smile on my face as he talked to me. It was only when I got back into my own room that the emotion hit me and it was 'yesss!'"

He got straight on to the phone to his family and close friends. One of the first he spoke to was his club colleague Frank Lampard junior, with whom he had been due to go on holiday. Trip cancelled.

Now that Ferdinand is in his own words "champing at the bit", he is not nervous yet, he added, fingering the diamond in his left ear. "When I get to France, that's when it will all sink in. It's the best feeling in football, you can't ask for more."

Scholes gives England win in France

BY MARTIN LIPTON

ENGLAND'S WORLD Cup campaign kicked off with a first win on French soil last night courtesy of a goal from Paul Scholes. The Manchester United man netted the only strike as Glenn Hoddle's side beat the French Second Division team Caen in a behind-closed-doors game within hours of their arrival across the Channel.

With television cameras and photographers banned, the only witnesses to England's win were some 200 local dignitaries who had been invited by the Football Association and the small French club.

There was a taste of home however, as some England fans who had been let into the stadium before the game left behind Union Jack banners on the benches behind one goal.

In a game played in steady rain, Hoddle used around 15 of his squad players. They included the Arsenal goalkeeper David Seaman, who had sparked fears he might miss out on Monday's opener against Tunisia when he left the squad's Buckinghamshire hotel yesterday morning with heavy strapping around his left thigh.

England officials, however, maintained the bandages were purely precautionary to avoid the Highbury man's dead-leg being inflamed by the trip from Heathrow. Hoddle reported no injury problems from the game and the coach added: "It was a very worthwhile exercise for us."

"Some of the players had not played a match for quite a period of time and nobody has played since the game against Belgium in Morocco last Friday week."

With reporters barred from going anywhere near the stadium, Hoddle, the few let in, and the England entourage, are the only people who will know how well they played.

Italy will be without Alessandro Del Piero when they face Chile in their opening World Cup match tomorrow.

Del Piero is recovering from a pulled adductor muscle and had hoped to be fit for the match in Bordeaux. But yesterday the Juventus striker acknowledged he needed more time and vowed instead to be back for Italy's second Group B match - against Cameroon in Montpellier on 17 June.

"Everything's going smoothly as far as the injury is concerned but it's become clear over the past few days that I won't be ready to face Chile," Del Piero said. "I'll carry on training and hopefully be ready to face Cameroon." Italy now appear certain to start tomorrow's match with the recalled Roberto Baggio and Christian Vieri in attack.

The Dutch defender Frank de Boer has twisted his left ankle in training and may miss the Netherlands' opener against Belgium on Saturday. He missed the 1996 European Championship after injuring his right ankle - but the latest injury appears less serious.

The Arsenal striker Dennis Bergkamp, who has been out of action for six weeks with a strained hamstring, has been training with the Dutch squad this week. He had seemed unlikely to play until the second round - but now the Dutch team doctor has not ruled out a place for him on the substitutes' bench on Saturday.

Nigeria have lost their defender Jero Shapoke, who, it was revealed yesterday, broke his left collarbone during last Friday's 5-1 friendly defeat in the Netherlands and will miss the tournament. The Olympic champions will ask Fifa, world football's ruling body, for permission to call up a replacement for Shapoke.

ENGLAND (starting line-up v Caen yesterday): Seaman, Neville, Adams, Scott, Gerrard, Anderson, Beckham, Ince, Scholes, Ferdinand, Shearer, Owen.



DIARY

THE THREAT posed by those booming, swerving free-kicks was already quite formidable and it will not help Scotland's sense of well-being that Roberto Carlos will be able to apply his special talents even more effectively today with the new World Cup ball. The manufacturers, Adidas, say that the softer-feel, enhanced grip of the "Tricolore" should enable the Brazilian defender to impart more spin, while its new foam structure will lead even more power to a left foot that can already send a ball hurtling towards goal at 100mph. However the good news for Colin Hendry and his fellow defenders is that the ball will feel softer to head while goalkeepers will be able to get a firmer grip on it.

TELEVISION SET sales in the major European countries appearing at the World Cup have increased sharply in recent months. Sales of new and top-of-the-range sets in Germany, France and Italy had all increased sharply as the World Cup approaches, according to Jean Dumas, European market development chief at electronics firm.

their Prime Minister has put money on them reaching the semi-finals. Radu Vasile has also promised to hand out bonuses to players for "good results". However, money and the Romanian squad is a touchy subject at the moment. Last week they refused to speak to the media after branding their remarks about player wealth as "hostile."

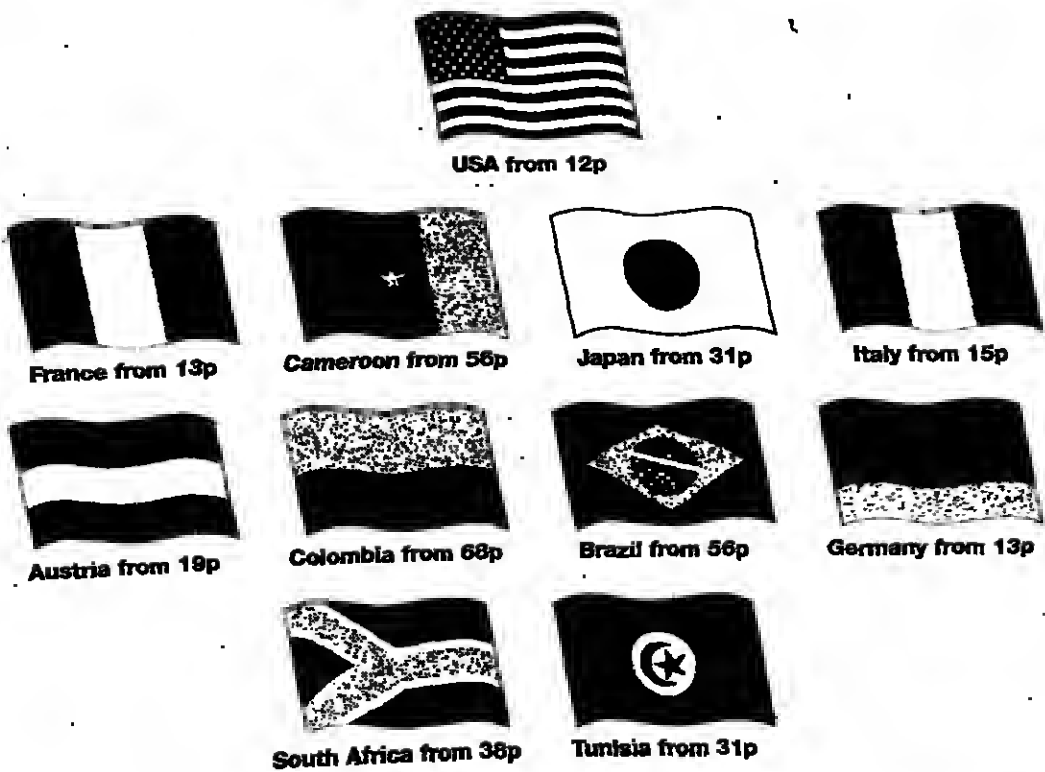
JUSTIN CURRIE of the rock group Del Amitri, who penned Scotland's World Cup song, will be £10,000 richer should they beat Brazil and Roberto Carlos help their cause with an own goal. The guitarist has wagered £50 on the 200-1 double with bookmakers William Hill who quote Scotland at 8-1 to win today's opener and Brazil as 11-4 World Cup favourites.

BRIAN MOORE has already decided what his last words will be when the final whistle blows on the World Cup final and the curtain falls on a distinguished 31-year career in television sport. The voice of ITV football will adapt the immortal words of Kenneth Wolstenholme and sign off with: "They think it's all over - and for me it certainly is." On the eve of his last assignment, Moore said: "Why try and beat it? It was the ultimate line for a commentator and everything is definitely Second Division after that."



The images of (from left) Messrs Le Saux, Beckham and Ince light up the white cliffs of Dover for promotional purposes yesterday

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The world champions open their campaign today burdened with the task of living up to an illustrious heritage

Echoes of the past surround Brazil

BY GLENN MOORE
in Paris

IF RONALDO, Roberto Carlos and Denilson have any doubts about the mantle they will take on at the Stade de France this afternoon, a pre-training visit to the Royal Monceau Hotel, in the shadow of L'Arc de Triomphe, would have underlined their responsibility.

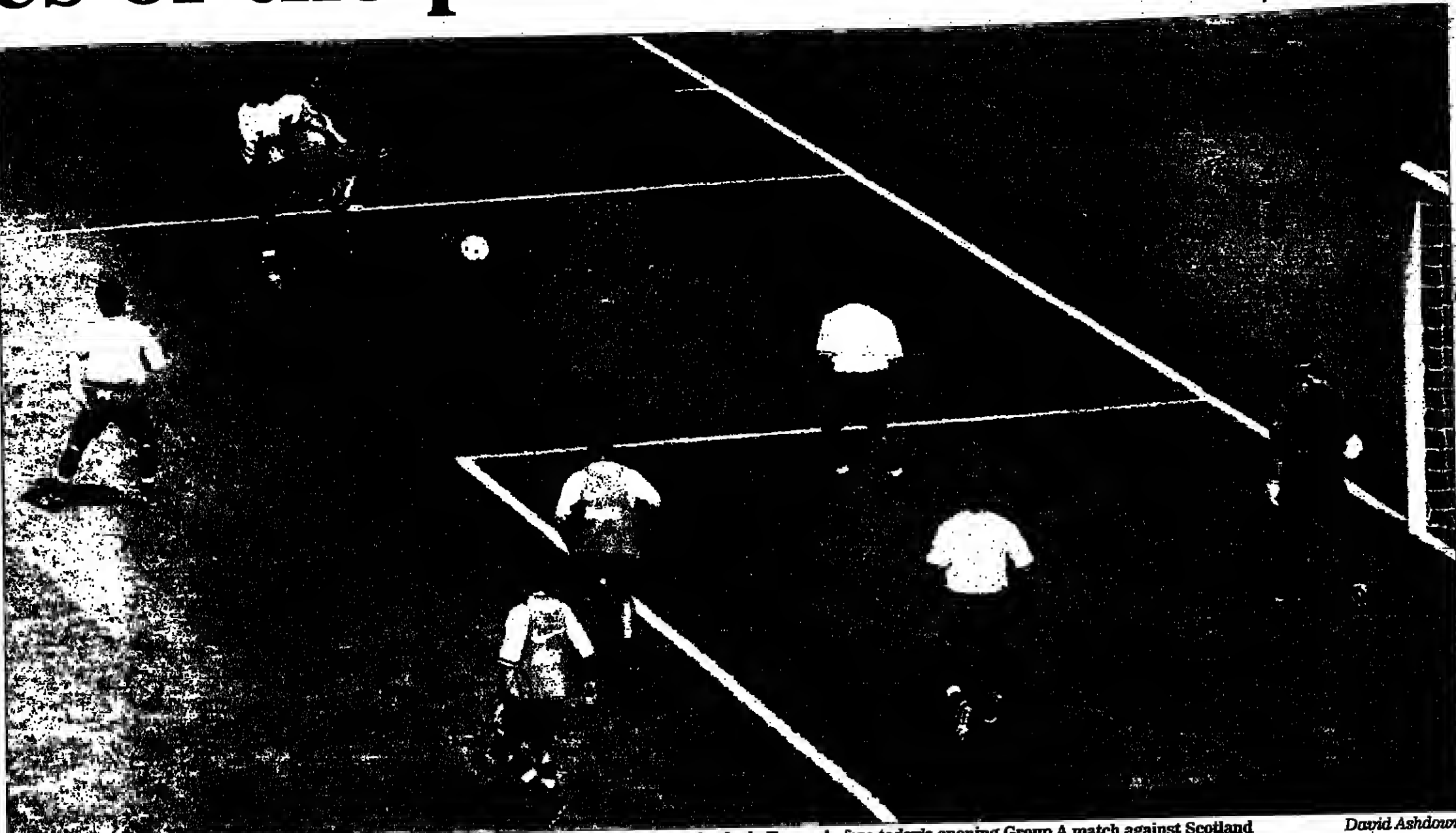
On a podium facing camera crews and journalists from around the globe sat three men of poise and presence. Their bodies were middle-aged but their minds were young and their reputations timeless. Between them Pelé, Carlos Alberto Torres and Nilton Santos won five World Cups. Yesterday, along with the late Garrincha, they made up a quartet of Brazilians selected in a team of the century.

They were gathered at the behest of Mastercard, one of those rare occasions when sponsorship enhances a World Cup. The team, chosen by journalists worldwide, brooked little argument. Brazil's place in the pantheon of football heroes was further illustrated when thoughts inevitably turned towards a second XI to play the first. The names of Didi, Rivelino, Jairzinho, Gerson, Zico, Junior and Socrates, who was also present, were quickly offered.

It is a formidable heritage and, a few months ago, the present *seleção* seemed worthy heirs. The champions of 1994 had added the youthful skills of Ronaldo and partners to the organisation and flair of Dunga, Aldair and Romário. As they toured the world for Nike, beating all-comers from Rio to Riyadh, they seemed invincible. Victory next month, and a footballing variant on the tradition of a yellow jersey champion in Paris in July, seemed inevitable.

Since beating Germany in March, however, doubts have emerged. Their form has been poor, notably when losing in the Maracana to Argentina; they have suffered injury problems, including the loss of Romário and Marcio Santos; and there has been internal dissension.

Mario Zagallo, the coach, has had Zico, a great player but a man of little coaching experience, imposed on him as an "assistant". Zico and Romário do not get on and Romário, who disputed the extent of his muscle injury, did not leave happily. Zagallo then called up Emerson, a



Brazil's Bebeto (in orange bib) is tackled during his country's final training session at the Stade de France before today's opening Group A match against Scotland

David Ashdown

defensive player, leaving him dependent on either Bebeto, now 34 and short of match practice, or the extremely volatile Edmundo as Ronaldo's partner. Edmundo was subsequently reported rubbing his hands in his pockets about the fitness of Dunga, the form of Taffarel and Zagallo's alleged negativity and remoteness, and everybody's favourites are now just favourites.

Yesterday Pelé and Nilton Santos,

an inspirational left-back in Brazil's 1958 and 1962 successes, both said that they hoped Brazil would win but declined to follow Carlos Alberto, the captain in 1970, in predicting it. Pelé said it was the most even finals he had known while Alfredo Di Stefano, the other member of the Mastercard XI to attend, favoured France but also named Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Spain and England.

Even Carlos Alberto tempered his

support. "There is less creativity, less improvisation, in this Brazilian team and football generally. So I think it will be a physical World Cup. Brazil have worked hard on this but there have already been injuries." Now a coach of young players at his own school near Rio de Janeiro, he added: "There have not been any significant developments in the game since the 1974 Dutch side."

Far harsher criticism has been

made since the Argentina defeat. While the nature of the Brazilian media prevents the team drawing in the wagons as tightly as England, a familiar defensiveness has appeared, suggesting the most dangerous doubts, internal ones, are developing. "The Brazilian press are starting to undermine our work," said Roberto Carlos. "The world talks about fights which never happened. Between us, in the chateau of Grand

Romaine [Brazil's HQ] the atmosphere remains fine. The game with Scotland is of paramount importance. It can erase all the doubts about us being successful. I sense that, if we win, it will act as a trigger to put us on the right track."

It is not always easy being

But the balance must be struck - a

cocky team can be sloppy and lazy. The serious mood of this Brazilian team was evident as they trained at the Stade de France yesterday. A few miles away the heroes of the past were reliving their glided memories, today their successors must cope with the burden of adding to them. MASTERCARD WORLD XI: Ronaldo (Brazil); Carlos Alberto Torres (Brazil); Beckenbauer (West Germany); Moore (England); Wilson Santos (Brazil); Gifford (Scotland); Di Stefano (Argentina & Spain); Pelé (Brazil); Garrincha (Brazil); Pelé (Brazil); Maradona (Argentina).

QUOTES OF THE DAY

"Every player at some stage of their career has been described as having weaknesses - and I aim to find Ronaldo's." *Colin Hendry, Scotland captain*

"It's been a shock. None of the team could believe it. Some have suggested we should pull out, but I can't see the point of that. Abacha would want us to do well." *Daniel Amokachi, Nigeria forward, on the death of the country's leader, General Sani Abacha*

"I fear that stadiums might be filled with people who will not have the passion you would expect. I don't think people realise that this is an event of the greatest significance worldwide and that it's taking place in France." *Aimé Jacquet, French coach*

Captain Braveheart proud to be a fan on and off the pitch

EVERY PICTURE tells a story. Scotland's most famous celebrity supporter once sang, and it is certainly true of Colin Hendry's holiday snapshots from the World Cup summer of 1982.

There he is, a fair-skinned magnet to the Spanish sunshine, with a sombrero covering his distinctive blond locks, a stuffed donkey under his arm and a tartan scarf that revealed the real purpose of his visit.

Many a contemporary would be embarrassed to admit having been a starry-eyed kid who sang, chanted and worshipped the ground his predecessors played on, but then Hendry has always been his own man.

"I was a Scotland fan then, I'm a fan now who happens to play for the team and I'll be a fan long after I've finished," the 32-year-old Highlander asserts with a firmness that brooks no argument and typifies both the person and the player.

Hendry is both the captain and the most striking symbol of a Scottish team who, despite the lack of obvious "stars", have reached the finals of successive major tournaments under Craig Brown. He is a powerful and passionate man, "a bit of a Braveheart figure" according to the manager, who believes he would throw himself in front of a 10-ton truck if it meant protecting Scotland's goal.

There was a time when Hendry's game arguably contained too much Bannockburn bravado for Blackburn's good. He was the warrior centre-back who took it as a personal affront if his side fell behind and would go marauding upfield to rectify the situation.

Hendry still tackles with a claymore's incisiveness and lends his aerial ability at attacking set-pieces. But he also shows a greater sense of responsibility and awareness of his true value to both club and country. When Brown lost the unlucky Gary McAllister, he was the obvious candidate to lead the Scots in France, even though Tim Sherwood wears the armband at Ewood Park.

"It's something I revel in rather than being overawed by," Hendry explains. "I've always done a lot of shouting on the park, but you also need authority in the way you play to do the job. I think central defenders are ideally qualified. After all, we pit ourselves against the so-called stars of the opposing team - the strikers."

Talking of which, he will be up against the most expensive and effective in the world today when Scotland take on Brazil. If he had a fiver for everyone who has asked him about facing Ronaldo he would be Jack Walker, but Hendry insists that the Premiership has prepared him well.

"In the last month of the season alone I played against Shearer, Dublin and Huckerby, Vialli, Flo and Hughes. Has, Selbank, plus Bergkamp and Anelka. They'd walk into most

World Cup squads. And anyway, Ronaldo's only human."

They may prove to be famous last words, yet Hendry has no time for negative thoughts. "I'm up for it," he says. "I'm in there with the jersey, in my corner with the boxing gloves on. If there's ever a good time to play Brazil, it's in the opening game. Having said that, every Scotland player will have to perform to his full potential and give a bit extra on top."

Like any self-respecting Tartan Army veteran, he is steeped in the competition's lore. The chronology of the 1974 finals, when Billy Bremner came within a ginger hair's breadth of beating Brazil and putting Scotland in the second round, is burned into his mind. Images of 1978 - Peru and Iran, Archie Gemmill and Ally MacLeod - remain "vivid", and four years on he actually made it to Spain.

"Me and my mum and dad stayed near Torremolinos. I remember meeting Alex McLeish [Scotland's centre-half] before the New Zealand match, and him saying: 'Hello, wee man'. I was 15 and already quite tall, but to him I was still 'a wee boy for Keith'."

Hendry's birthplace, a "hard-working town" where many people are employed on the oil rigs or in the whisky industry, has been important in shaping his affable, uncomplicated personality. He grew up following his local Highland League club and goes home to see his parents whenever possible. With a chuckle that is affectionate rather than patronising, he tells me many in Keith expected him to spend a few weeks there before flying out to France.

Astonishingly for a player who, to borrow Iza-Bru's slo-

gan, might have been "made in Scotland from girders", there were some at his first club, Dundee, who thought him a malingering. Even those who knew of his problems with injury and illness never saw him as a future international.

"I remember about five us [players] sitting round at our digs talking about what might happen to us. The consensus was that one of us had a great chance of playing for Scotland, which he never did, and another could well reach the top, which he hasn't. I never got mentioned. I just faded into the background."

He did win a B cap in 1990, three years after he first joined Blackburn, but admits he may have been over-eager. It took a 5-0 rout in Portugal and the falling out with Richard Gough to persuade Andy Roxburgh to take a chance on Hendry, who

by then had become Kenny Dalglish's first major buy for Blackburn after a sabbatical at Manchester City.

When Brown took over, he recognised that Hendry's ability, properly channelled, could be an asset. He now has 32 caps and forms, with Colin Calderwood and Tom Boyd, the unit largely responsible for Scotland's fine record in competitive fixtures.

They have conceded only eight goals in 24 games, and no one has scored more than twice against them in Brown's four and a half years. Much as it hurt Hendry's patriotic pride that England should have been one of the few to take two goals off them - at Wembley during Euro 96 - he is philosophical about the endless action replays of Paul Gascoigne beating him before scoring.

"Rod Stewart told me he'd asked him about that goal and that Gazza reckoned he got a helping hand from above because I lost my footing. But I've never made any excuse about slipping and it's never worried me because it was a great occasion to be involved in and we played well."

Besides, there have been plenty of brighter moments in the dark blue. Hendry nominates a 0-0 draw in sub-zero temperatures in Moscow as especially gratifying. Beating Sweden after surviving "a pummeling" also rates highly, along with subduing Dennis Bergkamp and Patrick Kluivert against the Dutch at Villa Park.

Such results, allied to the recent draw with Colombia, give Hendry hope against Brazil where many see none. The role of underdogs suits the Scottish psyche, and he is keen to claim it against Norway and Morocco, too, on the basis that both are above them in FIFA's world rankings.

The history of what Hendry calls "the greatest tournament" has Scotland typecast as gallant failures, a tag he despises. "It's terrible," he says. "So it would mean everything to me to be in the team that finally reached the second round. And to be captain... I'd be so proud."



Colin Hendry: 'I'm in there with the jersey, in my corner with the boxing gloves on'

Reuters

All the scores

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SPORT

WOODWARD'S VIDEO NASTY P24 • RIO IN MOORE MOULD P28

Scots seek a surprise opening

By PHIL SHAW
in Paris

CRAIG BROWN was in jocular, almost bullish mood last night as Scotland steeled themselves to launch the greatest show on earth against the might of Brazil in the Stade de France today. Yes, he admitted, Scotland have booked a flight home at the end of the first round, beyond which they have never progressed in the World Cup or any championship. Then came the punch line. Beaming defiantly, Brown said that they have also reserved flights for the day after both the semi-finals and the final.

Even the wildest dreamers among the Tartan Army do not expect to be back at St Denis on 12 July. After all, Scotland have won only four games in six finals. But the fact that they have made contingency plans for every outcome is testimony to the meticulous organisation with which they hope to frustrate the holders.

A few hundred feet from where Brown spoke, the Brazilians were going through their paces, with only a few hundred photographers occupying the vast arena that will throb with 80,000 voices today. The repertoire was awesome: overhead kicks; viciously swerving free-kicks; audacious flicks and dummies.

Yet the Scotland manager is confident that his team will neither be overawed nor be outwitted tactically. After appearing to settle on his starting line-up on the mini-tour of the United States, Brown is now ready to surprise the world champions by throwing Darren Jackson into the fray at the expense of Gordon Durie.

Jackson, whose career was threatened by brain surgery in August, failed to command a regular place during Celtic's championship season. The lack of activity may now work in his favour. Brown described him as "electric" in training and may use him just behind a lone striker. Kevin Gallacher, to prevent Brazil building from the back.

Although this would mean a variation on his tried and trusted 3-5-2 formation, Scotland clearly hope to take Brazil unawares. Their coach, Mario Zagallo, has reportedly dismissed them as a typically British long-ball team. If that is the case - and Brown believes Zagallo must have been misquoted - then complacency and ignorance may yet undermine Brazil.

Their captain, Dunga, underlined the impression that Zagallo has mistaken Scotland for the Republic of



The Stade de France in St Denis was calm yesterday before the storm of noise which will greet the opening of the World Cup when Scotland face Brazil this afternoon

David Ashdown

Ireland, saying: "We intend to dictate play from the start and beat them at their own very physical game."

For the benefit of the Brazilian media, Brown pointed out that his squad contained a European Cup winner, Paul Lambert, and players with champions' medals from Scotland, England, Germany and France. "So we've got a lot of winners in the team, but not in the World Cup," he said, adding with another impish smile: "Not yet."

Brown anticipates that they will

respond to the atmosphere with "calm assurance, not fear", dismissing suggestions that they might play defensively as "a recipe for disaster". Experience has taught him that in every game, whatever the opposition, a team is liable to enjoy five or 10 minutes' ascendancy. When Scotland's time comes, Brown argued, they must be ready to gamble, to throw an extra man forward, in which case Jackson may have a dual responsibility.

If the Brazilians are not quaking

in the expensively sponsored Nikes at the thought of Jackson - or even Gallacher, whose whippet-like speed offers Brown his best hope of scoring - neither are the Scots daunted by the thought of facing Ronaldo. They have worked hard to avoid being caught one-on-one against the pace of the 21-year-old prodigy, but the first priority will be to stifle his supply.

Scotland are also heartened by the history of the opening fixture, which, Brown noted, "often throws

up a surprise". A Scottish victory would arguably be the greatest upset in the tournament's six decades. It would certainly rank alongside the 1-0 triumphs by the United States over England in 1950 and North Korea against Italy in 1966.

The past eight opening games, stretching back 32 years to a barren start by Alf Ramsey's England against Uruguay, have delivered a total of five goals. Four consecutive starters ended goalless until 1982, when Belgium's 1-0 success meant

Argentina became the first champions to open with a defeat since Italy in 1950.

Four years later, a Bulgarian team every bit as unfancied as Scotland came from behind to hold Italy 1-1. Their performance was notable for the heroics of Boris Mikhailov, who, coincidentally, followed Jim Leighton into Reading's goal. Leighton, 40 next month, wins his 87th cap today against the country whose victory in Turin eight years ago seemed to have ended his international career.

The start of that tournament produced another surprise to fuel Scottish fantasies, Cameroon overcoming Argentina, Diego Maradona et al, despite having two players sent off. Four years ago, Germany became the first holders in six finals to begin their defence positively. However, their victory over Bolivia, again by a single goal, offers further evidence to suggest that there will be no slaughter at St Denis.

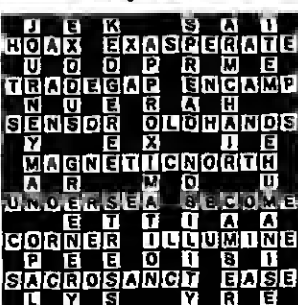
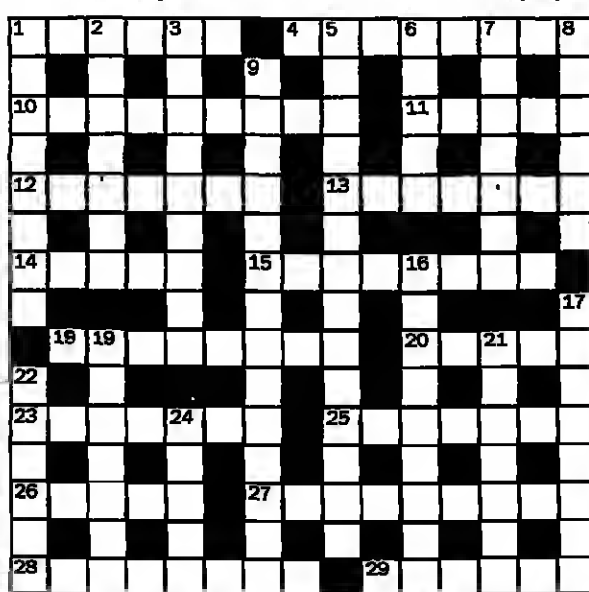
Scholes gives England victory, page 29

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3633 Wednesday 10 June

By Aquila

Tuesday's Solution



- ACROSS**
- 1 Singular swimming-stroke with a bad hand (6)
 - 4 Bashful in spinal injuries unit? (8)
 - 10 Silent pet trained in be vicious (9)
 - 11 Pound given to church, with some coppers (5)
 - 12 One, having compared outside, is elevated (7)
 - 13 Affair with Alison I abandoned (7)
 - 14 Haggard horseman (5)
 - 15 North African in a regal constitution (8)
 - 18 Thaumastus in hold up rose that is drunk (8)
 - 20 Inexpensive fruit? (5)
 - 23 Lamb after highball can be a bloomer! (7)
 - 25 Ladies and gentlemen, TS Eliot play! (7)

- DOWN**
- 1 Gemstone - perhaps one re-set (8)
 - 2 Science in split? Declare null and void! (7)
 - 3 Does one have trouble keeping watch with this carpal disorder? (5,4)
 - 5 Wantonly halts migration of these numbers (14)
 - 6 One that surpasses, for the listener, a letter from overseas (5)
 - 7 Failure to retain seaman I trained (7)

- 8 The Spanish gooseberry? (6)**
- 9 Deceased's name released as a safety measure (4, 4, 6)**
- 16 Carpet salesman over border - and moving! (9)**
- 17 Old gag for a horse (8)**
- 19 Wife once taking notes in coastal architecture (7)**
- 21 How like a primate, to copy love (7)**
- 22 Priest carried in a bicycle rickshaw (6)**
- 24 Suggestion heard from Latvians formerly (5)**

Chelsea capture £4.6m Desailly

By TREVOR HAYLETT

CHelsea HI-JACKED World Cup preparations for a second time yesterday as they completed the £4.6m signing of the Frenchman, Marcel Desailly, 24 hours after agreeing to pay roughly half that for the Spanish full-back, Albert Ferrer.

The versatile French international, who has 41 caps, finalised his transfer from Milan at the World Cup centre in Paris. He said he was looking forward to the challenge of playing in the Premiership after five years at San Siro. "I'm happy and it's an important thing in my career to go and play in England," he said.

"It was a big decision to leave Milan but Chelsea are in the Cup-Winners' Cup and they are a club that's growing."

Desailly, who can play in midfield or defence, represents the third major summer investment by Chelsea's manager, Gianluca Vialli, and underlines the London club's determination to add the Premiership crown to their collection of cups from last season.

Champions' League but this will be a new experience for me and I think that experience will be very successful," he said.

Martin O'Neill, who has spent the last week thinking over his future, has 48 hours to quit as manager of Leicester City - or Everton will look elsewhere for a manager.

The Irishman is aware that the Goodison club are involved in a long and protracted process of sacking their manager, Howard Kendall, and the job would appeal to him. However, the Merseysiders also need to know O'Neill's plans quickly or they will move to install an alternative replacement, with the Manchester United No 2 Brian Kidd and the former Celtic manager Wim Jansen two possible targets.

Meanwhile, Peter Johnson, the beleaguered Everton chairman who has won himself more criticism by leaving Kendall in the dark about his future, will head for a World Cup break in

the South of France this weekend in what is seen as an indication of his confidence in landing O'Neill.

The Southampton manager Dave Jones has opened negotiations to sign the French striker, David Zito, from the German side, Karlsruhe. The player is out of contract this summer and will fly to England for talks over a free transfer next week.

Jones has been given £10m to spend on strengthening his squad and needs to bring in a striker after last week's £7.25m sale of Kevin Davies to Blackburn Rovers.

Jones is also tracking the Belgian international Lokonda Mpenza from Standard Liège and has held talks with the Newcastle defender Darren Peacock and Tottenham's David Howells.

Saints have also expressed an interest in signing the Blackburn winger Stuart Ripley and Empoli's £5million-rated striker, Carmine Spasito.

The Belgium and Excelsior Mouscron defender Gordon Vidovic said yesterday that he is close to signing a three-year contract with Aston Villa for around £430,000.

Sheffield United have told Newcastle that they are not prepared to sell their £2m-rated defender Wayne Quinn until they have appointed a new manager. Reading are waiting to hear if Manchester United's reserve midfielder Grant Brehner will join them, while the Football League newcomers Halifax Town have appointed Chris Holland to succeed John Stockwell as chairman.



Desailly: Chelsea bound

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WEDNESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

Enough football, already. There are so many better things to do with one's time, so many alternatives. Why not, for example, visit one of the many countries that are (a) fascinating destinations, and (b) have not qualified for France '98. Countries like ...

- 1 Ireland, whose attractions include Guinness, rain ... and 10% added peace.
- 2 Russia: a lousy economy, too many crooks, but fascinating ... and big!
- 3 Australia: fond of barbecued prawns, apparently.
- 4 New Zealand: home of Cloudy Bay, the world's finest Sauvignon Blanc.
- 5 Portugal: far better beaches and sun than Spain, plus they let the bulls live.
- 6 Zimbabwe: spectacular wildlife, scenery, exchange rate ...
- 7 Kenya: as per Zimbabwe, but more dangerous.
- 8 Thailand: but for God's sake don't buy a souvenir bride.
- 9 Bali: the Indonesian crisis has left it completely empty of tourists, even prawn-loving Aussies.
- 10 Canada: not at all boring ... honestly.

Trouble is, all these nations will be taking World Cup TV broadcasts, despite their evident failings. There is, however, one nation whose team will be in France, but whose interest in football – sorry, soccer, is negligible, viz ...

- 11 USA: no footy on telly, radio, or in the papers. They've qualified, and they just don't care.

Then again there is a domestic option, to wit ...

- 12 The Huntsham Court Hotel, near Dorchester, Devon (01396 361 365) is both a delightfully eccentric country house (with a superb cellar) and also an entirely TV-free zone.

Still not certain enough of escaping? Okay try these ...

- 13 The Maruni Desert in Mexico has a mysterious 300 square-mile Zona del Silencio in which radio waves can neither be received, nor sent. So no World Cup telly there, either.
- 14 The two territories with the lowest population densities (and thus least footy-related chat per square mile) are Antarctica and Greenland.
- 15 The longest explored cave in the world is the 77,000-foot Nohoch na Chich system in Quintana Roo, Mexico. You should be safe at the far end of that.
- 16 The deepest cave is the 5,256-foot Gouffre Jean Bernard. But watch out ... it's in France.
- 17 But there's always Ogof Ffynnon Ddu in Wales (1,010 feet) – and the Welsh, sadly, have no World Cup interest.
- 18 Or climb Kankar Punzum, the world's highest unconquered peak, speaking of which ...
- 19 The country in which it stands, Bhutan, excludes corrupting Western culture ... like football. Still too risky? How about ...

20 Bouvet Island, an uninhabited Norwegian dependency 1,700 miles from the coast of Antarctica and officially the most remote place on earth.

But maybe places don't turn you on. Perhaps you're a people person. People who need people are, allegedly, the happiest people on earth. So why not get to know ...

- 21 Gazza: the World Cup is the last thing he'll want to talk about.
- 22 Jamie Redknapp: another England discard, who's spending his World Cup in the Caribbean. Then again, he's also marrying the pert pop singer Louise, so he probably won't welcome the interruption.
- 23 Rupert Murdoch: he'll need consoling having been deprived of the chance to buy the Cup for Sky Sports and thus sell yet more subs and pay-per-view to frenzied footie addicts.
- 24 The Queen: standing up for her female subjects Her Maj will not be joining Princes Phil, Andy, Ed, Chuck and Hal in France and so will be in need of amusing company (might make a change).

Combine your socialising with missionary work among Tory pundits like ...

- 25 Simon Heffer ...
- 26 Frank Johnson and
- 27 Dominic Lawson, all of whom have publicly expressed their loathing of football, out of solidarity, perhaps with ...
- 28 Mrs Thatcher: so refreshingly anti-soccer she tried to make all fans carry ID cards.

Prefer someone a tad more liberal? Try ...

- 29 John Mortimer: came out against footy-mania on the day England played Germany in the Italia '90 semi-final. Or ...
- 30 Gordon Brown: way sporting in his youth. But if Tony loves football, Gordon must surely now be agin it.

For all the propaganda linking New Ladettes with men in shorts, most women still fail to see the significance of overpaid idiots kicking a ball around. So ladies, why not invest in ...

- 31 ... Viagra? This could be your big chance. Unless your would-be partners have something better to do with their time. Such as ...
- 32 Complete their take-over of the world while all the men are distracted. Or, more specifically ...
- 33 Learn to fly. Over 33 days there will be 64 World Cup games of 90 minutes each. That's a minimum 94.5 hours, more than enough for the 50 hours (and c.£5,000 + VAT) it takes to get a Private Pilot's License.
- 34 Try helicopters: 40 hours flying-time, but £3,000-plus.
- 35 Linguaphone language courses (£180-£300) assume around 90 hours of study. Apparently Spanish and Dutch are the easiest to learn – and



ways to avoid France '98

BY DAVID THOMAS

good outside tips for the World Cup too.

36 That same time devoted to computer training would make you a PC expert at basic programming.

37 A four-part Microsoft Office course at Pitmans (0800) would get you up to advanced level – a handy job-qualification.

But since it is young men who are under-skilled these days, why don't they swallow their sexist pride and do ...

38 ... a secretarial course? With 60 hours training and 36 practice, you could reach 60 words-per-minute typing or shorthand. And your potential income would rise by c.£2,000 p.a.

And since young men, say the Army, are underfit ...

39 Go to the gym. Why swallow six-packs when 96 hours of weights should make your stomach look like one?

40 Learn to programme a video. Someone has to.

Still got time to spare?

41 Go on, write that novel: 2,000 words a day for 34 days will result in a slim, but significant volume ...

42 ... Or three film scripts.

43 Design a better Millennium logo. Shouldn't be difficult.

44 Invent a more persuasive Diana conspiracy.

45 Stop flicking over the foreign pages and work out what's really going on in Kosovo ...

46 Or Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, The Spratly Islands etc ...

47 Get on a Virgin train from London to Manchester. By the time you arrive the World Cup will all be over!

48 Read Proust ...

49 ... and Underworld, the Book of the Year that wasn't ... and that new paperback edition of Satanic Verses.

Bear in mind, too, the effect of daytime games involving England or Scotland. So ...

51 Enjoy the pleasures of empty shops and museums

52 Catch up on work in a peaceful, empty office ...

53 Irritate colleagues by inviting them to crucial meetings/job interviews/ salary reviews at 4.30 today, 4.30 next Tuesday (if Scots), or 1.30 on Monday (if English).

Normally snooty nature of s at trendy restaurants will be desperate for custom, so ...

54 Make June 23 and 26 your nights for dining out.

Of course, there are other cul-

tural events. For example ...

55 The Rolling Stones start the tour that isn't coming to England in Nuremberg on Saturday. Check out the dates at Milan's San Siro Stadium (June 16) or the Estadio San Mames, Bilbao (June 18) ...

56 ... and visit Frank Gehry's wild new museum while you're there.

57 The new Lloyd Webber musical whistle down the W ind starts previews from June 17, opening night July 1. It's meant to be not bad ... No, really.

58 Ozzy Osbourne's Ozfest Festival at the Milton Keynes Bowl (June 20) is a must for all metalheads.

59 Glastonbury (June 26-28) is perfect for rock-loving merchant bankers.

60 Great news for eccentric, chubby curmudgeons! Bob

Dylan and Van Morrison are touring Britain throughout the World Cup period.

61 Even better news for insomniac Brummies! Mark Knopfer's Notting Hillbillies are at Ronnie Scott's, Birmingham, from July 10.

62 And – please try to contain your excitement – Van Halen play the NEC the same night.

63 Scots can go to T in the Park on July 11 and 12 (day of the Final). It's no shame to be knocked out in the opening round, honestly ...

But enough low culture. Serious music lovers can rejoice in ...

64 The Hampton Court Festival, starring Bryn Terfel, José Carreras, Paco Pena and Nigel Kennedy (premiering his Hendrix Concerto with full 12-piece band): June 11-20.

65 The Four Seasons by Candlelight (well, okay, not that serious) at the Royal Albert Hall, July 12.

66 Balletomanes will flock to Romeo and Juliet at the Royal Albert Hall (June 18-30), or ...

67 ... The Royal Ballet's summer season, opening at the Coliseum on July 7 (semi-finals day, incidentally) with La Bayadere.

68 Lovers of faded glory, bathos, displays of extraordinary but somehow irrelevant accomplishments – plus parents of small children – should try The Moscow State Circus in Manchester (till Sunday) and Blackburn (June 18-21).

69 People who want to hear Julie Andrews provide the voice of a talking parrot are in luck, too: Dr Doolittle begins previews at Leabett's Apollo, Hammersmith, from June 29.

70 Want sensitive, female-friendly, who-needs-men-anyway-style films? Try Object of My Affection (opens end June): Friends' Jennifer Aniston is an expectant mum who kicks Dad out of the house and moves in with a gay pal.

71 Or Soul Food (June 12): George Tillman's warm, funny tale of a black Chicago family gathering for grub and emotion with their matriarch Big Mama.

72 Or even Mimi (June 26): Mira Sorvino battles mutant cockroaches (an obvious metaphor, surely) in the New York Subway.

And let's not forget, there are still other sports being played, apart from football. Cricket, for example, hence ...

73 The 2nd and 3rd Tests against South Africa at Lord's (June 18-22) and Old Trafford (July 2-6), plus the very last ...

74 Benson and Hedges Cup Final, at Lord's, July 11th.

Sporting masochists, too, should not miss the opportunities provided by tours of the southern hemisphere by Britain's rugby teams. Look out for ...

75 Two rugby Tests against the All Blacks ...

76 ... and one against South Africa.

But what about those events which a Brit might win?

77 Scotsman David Coulthard could possibly triumph at the French Grand Prix (July 5th), or even ...

78 The British Grand Prix at Silverstone (July 12th)

And let's not forget the beefy, John Bull-esque figure of Greg Rusedski (a not rempotely Ukranian/Canadian individual, obviously), who may just, possibly, conceivably win ...

79 Wimbledon. Assuming Tim Henman doesn't.

80 Go fishing – they're the animals you can kill between meals, and not worry about being banned.

And speaking of politics, why not ...

81 Be the first on your block to memorise the names of William Hague's exciting new Shadow Cabinet. Only one on your block, too ...

82 Join an Air France picket-line.

83 Cycle around Paris pretending to be a striking plain-clothes detective: who's to know?

84 Get on the Internet: by July 12 you may just have (a) figured out how to surf, (b) found something interesting and (c) downloaded it.

85 Turn off the box and talk to your friends, family, lover. Go on, just try it.

86 Avoid the arguments inevitably caused by 85 by going into the garden: all that rain is making it super-fertile at the moment.

87 Boycott Sainsbury's ... it's the World Cup supermarket.

88 Break down. Don't call Green Flag – they're the England sponsors.

89 Turn your back on McDonalds, Walkers Crisps, Lucozade, adidas, Pizza Hut and any companies who use footballers in their ads.

90 Sulk.

91 Write rambling, incoherent letters in green ink, to all the TV companies, complaining about their ludicrously excessive World Cup coverage. Insist on a reply.

92 If reply does not arrive within five working days, compose more letters, increasing levels of abuse and irrationality.

93 Smoke lots of dope ... Oh, hang on, wrong editor ...

94 Hit anyone who repeats that hackneyed Shankly quote about football not being a matter of life and death because, "It's more important than that". No, it isn't.

95 Ditto anyone theorising about Fever Pitch.

96 Or anyone beginning a dinner-party conversation, "I only started liking football a couple of years ago, but I'm really into it now."

97 Spend the World Cup in jail, by following advice in 92-6 (above)

Or, follow my personal tip ...

98 Devote all your waking hours to writing deft articles about avoiding France '98.

INSIDE

Letters 2
Leaders and comment 3-5
Obituaries 6-7

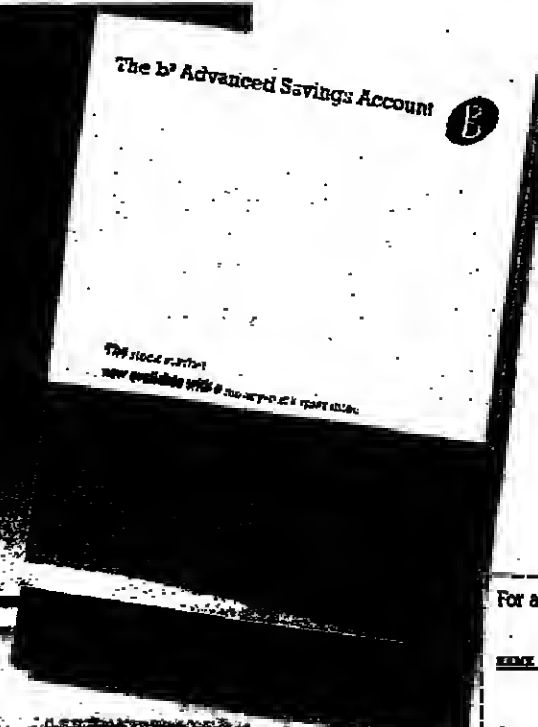
Features 8-9
Arts 10-11
Fashion 12-13

Finance and Secretarial 14-20
Listings 21-22
Games 23

Radio 23
Satellite TV 23
Today's TV 24

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Luvvie and understanding

A MOST extraordinary trial is going on in the High Court at the moment, in which an actor is suing his own theatre company for mental cruelty, on the grounds that being forced to play big Shakespearean roles has caused him occupational anguish. Here is an extract from yesterday's proceedings.

Counsel: You are an actor?
Actor: That I am.
Counsel: A Shakespearean actor?
Actor: A very Shakespearean actor.
Counsel: And what is your name?
Actor: Do you mean the name I use upon the stage or the name my parents gave me?
Counsel: I mean your real name.
Actor: Ah, but what do you mean by real name?



MILES KINGTON

'We describe 1984 as Orwellian not Blairite'

Counsel: The name by which you were registered or under which you were christened, of course.

Actor: There is no "of course" about it. The name our parents gave us is one we had no choice in. It is something inflicted on us at birth. It is an uninvited piece of labelling which we can discard at will. And many of us actors do so discard our names. We embrace a name of our own choice and become known to the public under that name. Is that not more like a real name?

Counsel: Yes, but ...
Actor: When Eric Blair changed his name to George Orwell, which was then his real name? When we refer to conditions of the kind described in 1984, we call them Orwellian. We do not call them Blairite.

Counsel: Those of us outside New Labour do!

Judge: A hit! A palpable hit! Counsel: Thank you, my Lord. Now, will you tell us the name under which you prefer to be known?

Actor: The name by which I am known is Adam Crayston.

Counsel: And it was under this name that you were chosen by the Terrestrial Theatre Company in 1997 to play the part of Macbeth.

Actor: The Scottish king, yes. Counsel: In the play of the same name by William Shakespeare?

Actor: The Scottish play, yes. Counsel: The play which is called ...?

Actor: The Scottish play. Counsel: Ah, but what is its real name, Mr Crayston?

Actor: It all depends what you mean by real name ...

Counsel: The name that appears on the title page and the theatre programme ...

Actor: Do I have to say it?

Judge: What's going on here, Mr Willoughby? Why are you trying to get the plaintiff to utter the name of a play?

Counsel: Because, my Lord, actors are a very superstitious lot and believe it is bad luck to say the name *Macbeth*, so they say "the Scottish play" instead. I aim to force the plaintiff to say the word, in order to demonstrate to the court how irrationally and illogically he behaves.

Judge: Or, alternatively, to bring him bad luck.

Counsel: I am prepared to take that risk, my Lord.

Judge: Good. Carry on.

Counsel: Mr Crayston, it is your contention that having to play *Macbeth* adversely affected your mental state?

Actor: It did, yes.

Counsel: Did you perhaps find yourself wishing to be King of Scotland? Were you tempted to have rivals murdered? Did you go looking for witches at night?

Actor: No. It took a slightly different form.

Counsel: Tell us.

Actor: To be able to play the Scottish king properly, an actor has to master many different moods in one single performance. He starts as a loyal and eager subject. He ends as a roaring wounded lion. In between, he has known cowardice, ambition, murderous rage, terrible fear, tenderness and grim resolution. He has been fêted and reviled. He has seen his wife go mad and had small children murdered.

Judge: Good heavens. This man sounds as if he needs psychiatric help to me.

Actor: Exactly, my Lord. And after a few weeks of this, I felt the same myself. That is why I am seeking compensation.

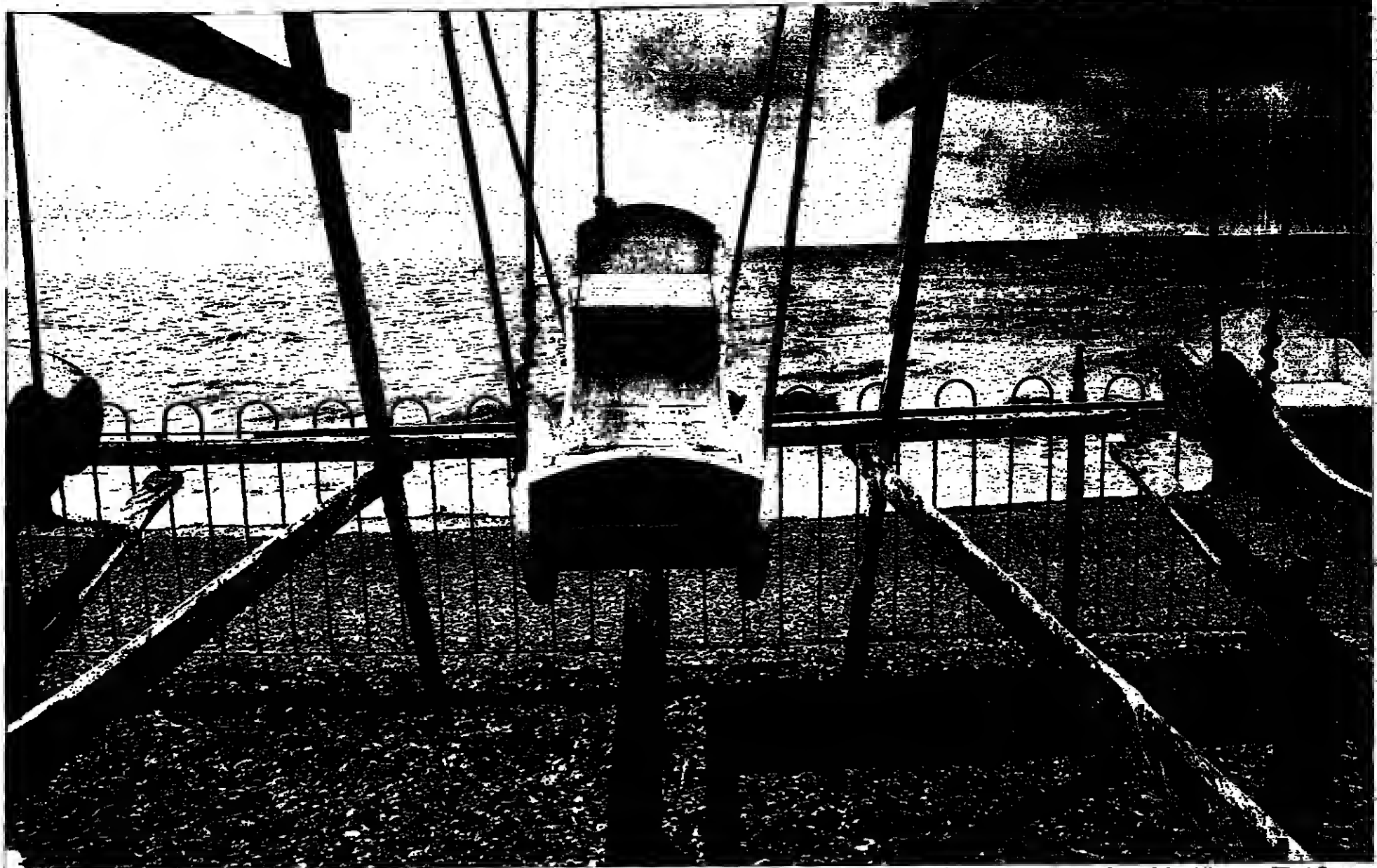
I was subject to mood swings, black rages and fear of conspiracy. I thought other actors were plotting against me. I even started to see things.

Counsel: What sort of things did you start to see?

Actor: Why look behind the judge, in yonder seat there stands the figure of a hideous lion! It snarls, and makes as if to eat us all! No, stay! It fades, and we are safe again.

Judge: I think we might adjourn this for a while. Blank verse proceedings are not quite my style.

More of this soon, I hope.



In the second of our series of coastal towns preparing for summer, by Nikki English, an empty boat rocks back and forth during the seafair at Bognor, West Sussex

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Police too powerful

Sir: The tenfold increase in police stops and searches, and disproportionate searches of members of ethnic minorities, is shocking but not surprising ("Blacks are targeted for police searches", 8 June). Over the past four years there has been a steady increase in police powers to stop and search, without the traditional safeguards to prevent arbitrary action and unjust discrimination by the police.

These changes have slipped through barely scrutinised, challenged, or even noticed by most people other than criminal lawyers. Yet they may breach Article 5 (liberty and security of the person) and Article 8 (privacy) of the European Convention on Human Rights, shortly to be incorporated into our domestic law.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 amended the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1989 to legitimise the existing "ring of steel" stops and searches at roadblocks in the City of London. The same statute gave the police new powers to set up stop-and-search zones wherever there are reasonable grounds to believe that serious incidents of violence may take place within the area. The Knives Act 1997 empowered the police to create stop-and-search zones in any area where there are reasonable grounds to believe that some people would be carrying knives. These grounds are so broad that in theory they could include, for example, most football matches and many metropolitan areas for much of the time. Following the authorisation of a stop-and-search zone, police officers can search anyone, without needing a reason.

Changes to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act Code of Practice C, also in 1997, mean that the police can now search anyone they reasonably believe to be a member of a gang, or even their associates. This would enable a police officer to search an individual by reason of what is known generally about the company he or she keeps. It thus carries the test of reasonable suspicion into the realm of speculation.

Drastic changes are needed in the police culture which renders some people far more likely than others to be the target of suspicion just because of their racial or cultural identity. It is an absolutely fundamental aspect of our civil liberties that police officers should only be able to arrest, detain or search us if they have some objectively testable suspicion about a particular person for particular reasons. Without this protection, police officers are not subject to the rule of law, they are the law.

LIZ FARRATT
Liberty
London SE1

Sir: You report (5 June) that the Crown Prosecution Service, after a "fresh review" of the case in which the Nigerian asylum-seeker Shiji Lapite died after being arrested by the police, has decided not to prosecute any police officers.

To enable your readers to

understand how Black people see such decisions, please allow me take them on an imaginary journey. A 34-year-old healthy, White Briton, is picked up by the Nigerian police on a Lagos street in the wee hours of the morning. He is swaying as he walks and is suspected of being drunk, though he has not committed any act of disorderly conduct. He does not agree to be arrested, as he has done nothing wrong. In his own view, five Nigerian policemen then place him in a neck-lock and use their batons to effect his arrest. They drive him to a police station. He is later found to be dead.

The Nigerian Ministry of Justice decides that no one should be prosecuted, because five Nigerian pathologists cannot agree on the exact cause of his death.

The laudable concern shown for British citizens who run into trouble abroad compares ill with the relative indifference of the same public and media to the fate of Blacks here. Such hypocrisy undermines the widely held notion that Britain is a liberal, civilised country whose example should be a shining light to Commonwealth and other countries that routinely abuse human rights.

CAMERON DUODU
London SE15

Student loans

Sir: Your conclusion that non-graduates should not have to pay through their taxes for graduates' education is flawed (leading article, 6 June). If good-quality higher education is essential for the progress of society, then everyone benefits from it. To argue that higher education is simply a product which benefits the recipient, is to risk undermining society's progress. If your conclusion were to be accepted, it would follow that people without children should not have to pay through their taxes for the school education of millions of other people's children. Watch this space ...

This is certainly in tune with a political approach that says there is no such thing as society, but I thought that had been rejected at the last election.

BRIAN G SMART
Matlock, Derbyshire

Sir: Aversion to debt among children from poorer backgrounds will aggravate the current elitism of the higher education system. Taking on £10,000 or more of debt at the age of 18, even if the repayment period does begin later on, poses a genuine deterrent for children from poor families with no tradition of education at tertiary level. The maintenance grant is the only incentive for these prospective students in the current system of funding.

While future graduate contributions sound fair in principle, in practice they fail to recognise attitudes among those who are most in need of greater participation in higher education.

ALEXANDRA PARDAL
Edinburgh

The writer is an undergraduate at Edinburgh University

Sir: The fact that students are likely to graduate with debts of up to £10,000 is already proving a deterrent to many young people who would otherwise have seized the opportunity to benefit from higher education.

The promise that student loans will only need to be repaid once graduates can afford so to do is only worth as much as the trust which students have in their government. As we are deprived of the maintenance grant which was so staunchly defended by the present government when it was in opposition, students have good cause to think carefully before accepting government statements.

MATTHEW SMITH
Corpus Christi College
Cambridge

Sir: There are every year a tragic number of students who take their own lives. This toll arises from a number of causes: increasing financial pressures will increase it.

MAYNARD HALL
Wigton, Cumbria

Sir: Your example (8 June, page 3) of an A-level student being pressurised into excessive part-time work appears to keep horses; and your example of a graduate recruited by the sex industry to pay off debts (same date, page 8) has also taken a round-the-world trip on the proceeds. Are we really expected to take this seriously?

DR TOBY BAILEY
Edinburgh

Sir: If the grant is abolished, can we then expect to see the dole being replaced by a loan, to be repaid once a job has been found?

ANDREW COSGROVE
Clare College
Cambridge

Medical glass ceiling

Sir: Your article "Where are the female surgeons?" (6 June) raises some important questions. First, has there been any investigation into why the 11 women surgeons who preceded Briony Ackroyd in the flexible training scheme were unable to make it work? These schemes were designed specifically to retain women with children in the profession, and were funded by taxpayers' money. It seems inconceivable that 11 out of 12 highly selected women surgeons fell short professionally - the explanation must lie elsewhere. The cost of training a doctor to consultant level is £250,000, and their loss represents the waste of a sum approaching £2.75m.

Second, that "they" threatened not to renew Briony Ackroyd's contract on the grounds that she was a woman and older than her fellow trainees is obviously illegal, and reflects the extraordinary ignorance of many male surgeons of the most basic aspects of equal opportunity treatment. I also was told "you will be too old to be a consultant", and that "we feel it is not possible to train a woman part-time in this department". This is part of male hospital culture that needs to be dealt with very vigorously.

Third, an inquiry into a surgeon's competence in training is very unusual, and must have been exceedingly painful. What proportion of men in training are subjected to this, compared with the women? If a disproportion exists, the reasons for initiating such an inquiry must be closely examined by an outside agency.

I feel the profession is unable to monitor its own performance in training women. This is an appropriate area for external regulation.

JANEY HUBER FRCS
Cambridge

After the Lords

Sir: The second parliamentary chamber (leading article, 8 June) must be effective, independent-minded and a real check on the House of Commons and the executive as well as on legislation emerging from Brussels. It cannot be any of these things unless it has constitutional legitimacy: people have to believe in it.

The hereditary House of Lords has a constitutional basis, however dim and distant, in the old hierarchy of monarchy and aristocracy. Because this basis remained intact the Lords were able - just about - to absorb the creation of life peers. However an entirely appointed second chamber such as the Government now proposes would have no constitutional or moral justification at all.

Since the hereditary principle has had its day, the only defensible basis for a second chamber now is direct election. Better still, we need a chamber detached from the politics and timescale of the House of Commons. It should be elected for a fixed term of five or seven years and by proportional representation, a principle which the Government has already conceded by implication when it talks about rough balance between Labour and Tory peers in an appointed House of Lords.

Of course such an elected chamber would have to be given real powers. There is scant chance that any government - especially the present one - or the Commons would agree to that, so it looks as though the basic issues of principle, which are really very simple, will continue to be dodged.

MICHAEL JOHNSON
London N6

Teenage mothers

Sir: There are two myths that liberal sex educators wish to promote. First, that school sex education leads to the delay of sexual activity. Secondly, that the Netherlands followed by Sweden have the lowest teenage pregnancy rates in Europe - whilst Britain has the highest. It is important that those making such assertions can show that they are based on evidence, not hearsay.

Your article "Too little, too late" (12 February) asserted that these two myths were fact. Having studied the research on the subject I have been unable to discover any reliable evidence showing that sex education does not encourage earlier sexual activity. The need for myth-making

has intensified because of the recent vogue for abstinence programmes in the US. The idea that sexual health might best be promoted by teaching abstinence is anathema to some liberal educators.

The real issue for researchers is to explain the explosive growth in premarital and promiscuous sexual activity - first noted in the US, then in the Netherlands and latterly in the UK.

FRED NAYLOR
Kingsdown, Corsham, Wiltshire

Persecuted gays

Sir: Ann Widdecombe ("Tory hits out at gays and lone parents", 8 June) complains of gay men benefiting from "the politically correct jargon of equal rights". May I ask her to think again?

My only significant experience of discrimination, as a five-year-old schoolboy in the US, was for being English. It rapidly led me to realise two things. First, however many times I came home with a bloody nose I was still going to be English. Second, that I was not ashamed of being English. I was proud of it and unwilling to give up one jot or tittle of my English idiom to accommodate bullying.

Ann Widdecombe, who does not lack for political courage, will understand how I felt. I am sure many gays who have been victims of discrimination felt exactly that same way. Why shouldn't they?

EARL RUSSELL
House of Lords

IN BRIEF

Sir: Richard House (Letters, 5 June) would have us believe that the fruits of scientific endeavour are culturally relative, rather than objective. This silly postmodernist idea suggests that alternative beliefs are as valid as any scientific theory. In dinner-table speak, this notion is often expressed as "science is a belief system, just like religion".

So, if you believe the Earth is flat, you are no less correct than the majority who believe it is round. Likewise, an Indian yogi who believes he can fly really can defy the law of gravity. Dr House might wish to test his theory by stepping off the top of a tall building.

DR SIMON JONES
London SW12

Sir: Does Prince Charles realise that the genetic manipulation he so strongly opposes is the very reason why he exists? In the past the process has taken many generations and has been rather haphazard. He might, for example, like to consider George III. Science can now speed up the process to one or two generations.

ALEX MACFARLANE
Hull

Sir: It has been said that football is the "new rock'n'roll". In the light of recent events, I would suggest that football is, in fact, the new darts.

TONY COX
Brighton, East Sussex

THE REVIEW DAY BY DAY

MONDAY REVIEW

As well as our regular columnists, features and expanded comment pages, Network, our information technology section, moves to Monday.

TUESDAY REVIEW

An improved media section, with appointments, moves to Tuesday. Visual arts and more health pages are also Tuesday regulars

WEDNESDAY REVIEW

Fashion, midweek money pages, in addition to finance and secretarial sections (previously City+) will stay on Wednesday

THURSDAY REVIEW

Our education section will appear as a separate tabloid section. Improved and expanded film pages now move to Thursday

FRIDAY REVIEW

The architecture and science pages now move to Friday. In addition, we will have a new law section and our music pages

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Should we envy or pity the French?

WILL THE real France stand up, please. The sick man of Europe – stuck in the 1980s, a sclerotic, strike-ridden, trade union-dominated basket case? Or a mellow haven of the good life, with falling unemployment, booming exports, and a brasserie on every street corner?

When the World Cup kicks off this afternoon it will begin a month long orgy of all things French. But it is the surly side of France that will greet the Scottish and Brazilian fans in Paris. Air France pilots, junior hospital doctors and policemen will all be taking part in what seems to be France's second sport – striking. So has anything changed? Underneath the superficial similarity of these apparent throw-backs to Britain in the 1970s, the strikes are subtly different – more like Britain in the 1980s, and the reaction to Thatcherism. Part of the French problem is that strike action is seen as a normal part of negotiating tactics. The usual French strike has one motive – pay. And most public-sector strikes are a one way bet: whatever the result, any lost pay is handed over when the strike is over. But these are different. They are not so much a demand for more pay as a lashing out against plans to introduce more flexibility into employment contracts – a sign that at last French employers, state as well as private, are starting to face up to the need for change. This is not before time; although French unemployment has been falling for the past eight months and is now below 12 per cent, the total is still among the highest in the industrialised world. And youth unemployment is getting worse, with almost a third of all eligible under-24-year-olds out of work.

The Air France strike is an archetype of today's France. The pilots have, like most of the French workforce, effectively prescribed unemployment in the past, demanding high wages that price jobs out of existence. The management is now trying to force them to accept pay cuts. In a sector which is typified by inefficiency and waste, Air France remains one of the worst offenders. The Transport Secretary, Jean-Claude Gaxiot – a Communist – has fended off tentative plans to privatise the airline. Within the one dispute we have the French economic story: creeping acceptance of the need to change, bloody minded workers, almost the last redoubt of communism, and – most likely – an eventual muddling through.

But for all this, France remains the fourth largest economy in the world, has productivity levels the envy of Britain, an export-led economy that will stand it in good stead in the transition to EMU, insignificant inflation and interest rates of just over three per cent. Gordon Brown must wish at times that we should have such



problems. So why is it that Lionel Jospin is regarded with such barely concealed contempt by the Blairites? First, he gets – and deserves – little credit for the economic improvements. Most of them are the result of the tough measures undertaken by his predecessors to force France into meeting the EMU criteria. He has at best been wise enough not to interfere. At worst, his government has responded to the new demands of a changing world economy by ostrich-like measures – the proposals, for instance, to introduce a 35-hour week and to extend job sharing, which will tackle the symptom of unemployment, not the cause.

More fundamentally, the Blairite inheritance is very different. Tony Blair and the New Labour reformulation of social democracy are inconceivable without the benefit of Lady Thatcher's reforms. Even before Blair, Labour was undergoing a seismic ideological shift in response. Lionel Jospin however comes not, as Blair, from out of the 1980s, but from a 1970s socialism that was never extinguished. With the socialists in power, and an economy large and strong enough to hide the need to change, there was no change. Today there is no hiding place, and France is at last entering the 1980s.

A waste of energy, Mr Meacher

A DECADE AGO, when the year 2000 seemed a distant prospect, the then Environment Secretary, Chris Patten, set the target of recycling a quarter of the average dustbin by the millennium. By the latest estimate, we will not even get to within two thirds of that goal.

So the Environment Minister, Michael Meacher, is right to draw attention to the need for greater recycling. But he seems to be suffering from a bad dose of pre-reshuffle junior ministerialitis, a traumatic disorder which occurs when the victim believes he is soon to depart the ranks of government and launches himself on a frenetic bout of last-minute activity designed to boost his profile and show how important he is to the running of the country.

Promoting ideas that make recycling easier is one thing. When the consultation paper, entitled *Less Waste: More Value*, is published, it is to be hoped that it will contain practical ideas for making recycling easier. Instead, reaction to the paper is likely to be dominated by the apparent proposal to get the tax system involved. Whether it is in the form of tax breaks, tax penalties or council-tax rebates is almost irrelevant. The real concern is that this is an Old Labour approach in a New Labour guise. Who is to police the system? A new agency, with yet more environmental bureaucrats – or will dustmen be required to tick off a tax form and inspect the contents of rubbish bins as they make their rounds?

Instead, the Government should concentrate on measures with a practical bent, such as assisting the more laggardly councils in providing recycling facilities. And who has not sighed in frustration at the wasteful packaging that covers so much that we buy.

When Mr Meacher was questioned yesterday he was all smoothness and light. His ideas are not proposals, he opined, but suggestions. He should be forgiven his impression of Sir Humphrey only if it is a sign that he is already back-tracking.

One nation, two halves

WE ARE a nation of two halves. Some of us want to give it 150 per cent and can't wait to get stuck into Des, Mottie and South Korea v Mexico. Quite remarkable. If we don't like it, we'll have to learn to take it or end up sick as parrots. At the end of the day, everyone can agree that it's all about getting the ball into the back of the net. But the game is only over when the ref blows the whistle so, since the game is about winners, let's hope that our English and Scottish boys play blinders.

Lord Cranborne, his grandfather and a game with high stakes

FIRST A LITTLE history. The last time a Lord Cranborne was Leader of the Conservative Opposition in the House of Lords after a Labour landslide was in 1945. The programme for the Attlee government's first year launched an assault on the commanding heights of the economy which was calculated, in a way that makes the Blair government look feebly consensual by comparison, to horrify every red-blooded Tory.

Yet in the 1945 Lords debate on the King's Speech, Lord Cranborne, while sharply criticising the measures in the speech, had these cautionary words to say to his colleagues: "Whatever our personal views, we should frankly recognise that these proposals were put before the country at the recent general election and that the people of this country with the full knowledge of these proposals, returned the Labour Party to power. The Government may, therefore, I think, fairly claim that they have a mandate to introduce these proposals."

"I believe that it would be constitutionally wrong, when the country has so recently expressed its view, for this House to oppose proposals which have been definitely put before the electorate..."

It is this admirably democratic principle, known as the Salisbury doctrine in deference to the ancient title to which all Lord Cranbornes are heirs, through which his own grandson now intends to drive not so much a coach and horses as a lengthy queue of Eurostars, 20-ton lorries, and double-decker buses.

The Tory leader in the Lords has hinted, to put it at its politest, that he

will use the in-built Conservative majority in the Lords to do everything he can to block not only the proposal he is protesting about, the removal of the voting rights of hereditary peers, but the other legislation that passes through the Lords as well. For his part, Lord Richard, the Leader of the Lords, repeated yesterday that he was ready to invoke the Parliament Act to force the bill through the Commons if it becomes necessary.

Do not be deceived by the dustiness of the subject. This is a game being played for very high stakes indeed. One of the most frequent criticisms on the left of the Blair government is its alleged reluctance to make enemies, to engage with the forces of reaction. Over this issue, however, lack of engagement is not a problem. Gears will grind and brakes will squeal. The hereditary peers' capacity to inflict grave damage on the Government's legislative programme by delaying measures for up to two years is not in doubt.

This promises, unless either side has a change of heart, to be one of the great constitutional showdowns between a left-of-centre government and the overwhelmingly Tory-dominated House of Lords.

The ostensible argument of the Tory leadership is seductive. It is that the proposal will produce the "greatest quango in the land" and that it is the product of the Government's failure to lay out its plans for a properly elected second chamber. Delay the abolition of the hereditaries' right to vote, the Tories imply, and we will help you over time to develop radical long-term plans for a second chamber fully



DONALD MACINTYRE

A growing number of Tory MPs think their leader in the Lords is driving the party towards an electoral brick wall

appropriate to a modernised democratic Britain in the 21st century.

Of course, the Tories are right that the first-stage reform of an appointed Lords is a pale and dispiriting shadow of what a proper second chamber should be. There are however two problems with the Tories' approach.

The first is that a simple bill abolishing hereditary voting rights is what the British people indisputably voted for on 1 May last year.

The manifesto said that "as an initial, self-contained reform, not dependent on further reform in the future, the right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords will be ended by statute". If that isn't a proposal on which, to use the 1945 Lord Cranborne's words, "the gov-

ernment... may fairly claim a mandate", I don't know what is.

The Salisbury doctrine was good enough for the grandfather when discussing measures which included the nationalisation of the Bank of England and the entire coal industry. But it isn't good enough for the grandson when defending the voting rights of a hereditary peerage which polls show two-thirds of the country want abolished.

The second is the small question of whether Lord Cranborne is quite as open to reform as he claims. If the Cranborne blueprint for an elected chamber exists, it has passed me by. And since such a Tory plan actually exists, namely the one for a two-thirds elected, one-third appointed, second chamber drawn up 50 years ago by that revolutionary old desperado Sir Alec Douglas-Home, it might not be too difficult a task to produce one.

Lord Cranborne argues, of course, that it is not for him to do the Government's work. If the Government wants to agree a one-stage leap to a democratic second chamber let them produce their own plan.

Now there are grounds for believing that some ministers – Jack Straw for one – are more comfortable with the idea of an appointed Upper House than they should be. But even they would not let themselves be outflanked if the Tories were clearly serious about a "big bang" approach to Lords reform. And Lord Richard, who for all his worldly experience as a lawyer-diplomat shows every sign of being a genuine reformer, who wants to see a lively, democratic second

chamber, got nowhere with cross party talks on how such a chamber might be composed.

Ministers think Cranborne has been playing for time, that he is a reactionary wolf in a reformist sheep's clothing. But then they would. That analysis matters more because it is shared by a rapidly growing number of Tory MPs, particularly the younger ones, who believe privately that the noble Lord is leading them, apparently with the blessing of William Hague, towards an electoral brick wall.

OK, there is the mouth-watering prospect of tying the Government up in legislative knots for much of the Parliament. But they will be paying a heavy price with the voters for defending an archaic institution which makes Tory pretensions to a classless society look ridiculous. After all, as Paddy Ashdown has said, the Tories would have an ample part to play in formulating a democratic second chamber in the all-party talks envisaged in the pre-election Lib-Lab agreement on constitutional reform. Such talks are being considered along with the alternative of a Royal Commission by a Cabinet committee.

But then there is a difference between the Cranborne of 1945 and the Cranborne of 1998. The one in 1945 believed that in time the British people would change their minds and vote out the proposals passed by the Attlee government. The one in 1998 knows that no party will ever go to the country promising to restore the voting rights of hereditary peers. This, as Cranborne knows, is a last ditch. But a principle is a principle. Granddaddy must be spinning in his grave.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Heaven knows I made mistakes in my life. I am neither genius nor saint"
Jeffrey Archer,
author and politician

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"All that I know most surely about morality and obligations, I owe to football"
Albert Camus,
writer, philosopher and goalkeeper

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THE INDEPENDENT

Eileen McNamara, Boston Globe (US)

IT DIDN'T take Harvey Silverglate, Andrew Good and Barry Scheck long to cut Elaine Whitfield Sharp loose, did it?

The former colleague of the sacked defence lawyer Whitfield Sharp are not beneath casting aspersions in her direction.

"Unfortunately, Ms Sharp has at times exhibited an aberrant pattern of behaviour," Silverglate, Good and Scheck said, in a stunning display of

disloyalty that accompanied their announcement that Whitfield Sharp had been fired from the Woodward defence team.

If only they had elaborated. What, we can only wonder, is Harvey Silverglate's idea of "an aberrant pattern of behaviour"?

Could anything Whitfield Sharp has done have been more bizarre than the sight of the wild-eyed Silverglate on national TV accusing some of the world's best doctors of being part of a "child abuse

MONITOR

THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

Today: American reactions to the Louise Woodward affair



cult" because they testified to their conviction that Louise Woodward battered Matty Eapen to death?

A fatal case of child abuse has devolved into a game of

competitive defamation among a pack of deranged lawyers.

Camille Paglia, Salon Magazine (Internet)
The Eapens obviously ex-

ploited their 18-year-old au pair for duties that should have been handled by a mature babysitter or nanny.

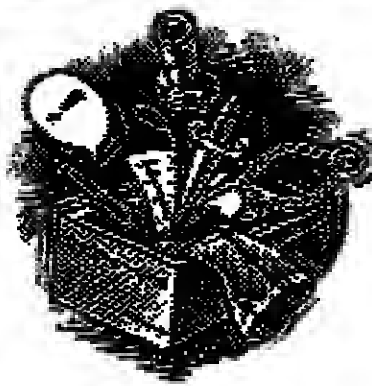
Once seething tension erupted with the au pair over her social life, how stupid could parents be to leave their very small children under her supervision?

There was no firm physical evidence that it was Woodward, rather than Matthew's parents, brother, neighbour or family friend, who accidentally or purposefully caused his

skull fracture and weeks-old broken wrist.

Indeed, the sometimes homicidal hostility of toddlers toward an infant sibling who displaces them in the family limelight is well established in the annals of psychology. Every possible alternative hypothesis needed to be excluded.

The international focus on the Eapen case (the trial was broadcast in England) is highly embarrassing to the American judicial system.



PANDORA

THE CLINTON era in Washington DC hit a new low last week when Congressman Dr Tom Coburn delivered a sex education lecture, complete with hideous colour slides, of sexually transmitted diseases, to a group of young interns at the House of Representatives.

Coburn is a right-wing doctor from Oklahoma who previously attacked a US television network for showing Spielberg's epic about the Holocaust, *Schindler's List*, because it included "full-frontal nudity, violence and profanity". Clearly a deep thinker.

Coburn told the interns over a lunch of pastami sandwiches, that "men are liars", but assured them, "I gotta tell you I like sex."

As a number of American college students come to Parliament as interns every year, Pandora wonders if they will expect the same educational treatment when they arrive. Certainly Westminster is not short of experts. There's Cecil, Robin, Alan, David, even Paddy could speak with some authority on the subject...

MANY APOLOGIES to the Samaritans for Pandora's suggestion on 5 May that the charity's radio commercial was tasteless. Having looked carefully at the broadcasted script, Pandora can see nothing tasteless in the text. It's only the unfortunate title printed at the top of the script page - "Don't Hang Up" - that seems in dubious taste when affiliated with the worthy anti-suicide volunteer group. But that wasn't broadcast.

THE FRIGHTFULLY expensive and obnoxiously exclusive fashion boutique Voyage turned away Julia Roberts (right) a few weeks ago because she didn't have her "membership card", or so *W* magazine reports. (Some months back it was reported to have denied access to Madonna.) When Pandora spoke to someone called Rocky at the locked shop yesterday, he put the blame on the paparazzi.

"Yes, we asked for her card at the door. But Julia was being hounded by the photographers and she simply ran away. Later her assistant rang us and arranged for her to come in after-hours." As for Madonna, Rocky said: "I don't think we could turn people like that away." Needless to say, people like Pandora had better stick to the Portabello Road.

THE ROLLING Stones are, of course, not the only rock 'n' roll stars to have turned against New Labour in recent days. Pulp's latest release *Cocaine Socialism* includes lines such as "So can you bring them to my party and get them to sniff this (party line) and all I'm saying is come and rock the vote for me..." While Pulp lead singer and lyricist Jarvis Cocker may not be in the running for this paper's political commentator job, his caterwaul of abuse will influence thousands of young people.

So what has influenced Cocker, a Labour voter, to attack Tony Blair's party? Pandora rang the singer's mother, Christine Connolly, a Conservative who lost her recent bid to become a parish councillor in Nottinghamshire by just one vote, and asked if her persuasive powers were responsible. "I'm my person," said his mother, refusing to take any credit. However, she was clearly a very proud mum and found her son's recent anti-Blair attitude "quite wonderful actually". And wonderful, too, how New Labour continues to bring this nation's families closer together.

THE DON'T Choke Britain Campaign's National Car-Free Day, faces a tough challenge next Tuesday. It coincides with the planned London Underground strike to run from 14-16 June. Will the streets of the Smoke be filled, Amsterdam-like, with hiccups? Is Oxford Circus full of trained elephants?

The British can't make radio waves



ANNE MCELVOY

Most callers wanted pornographers strung up while objecting to government infringing their right to receive hard-core satellite porn

CARELESS TALK is a profitable business. Achieving an audience of 2.3 million listeners, in just two years, makes Talk Radio an exciting enough prospect to have attracted the restless attention of the people's populist, Kelvin MacKenzie. Everywhere on the dial, audiences are filling up airtime. But not very well, unfortunately, for when it comes to public discourse, the British are still learning to talk.

No wonder Americans invented the talk-show; they are playing to their strength as epic monologists. If you listen to an ordinary American giving an eye-witness report of an event, you gain a far clearer idea of what happened than from the circumlocutory mumbles of the average British man or woman.

On radio phone-ins in the US, even those in the bulging intersection of radio's Venn diagram labelled "nutter" can express their views clearly and forcibly. The British equivalent features hesitation, repetition and contradiction galore, with the contributor more often than not having to be steered on the tightrope of syntax by the host.

Verbal ineptitude cuts across

classes and educations. Elite British graduates rarely match their American counterparts for spoken fluency. I suspect this goes back to so rarely being asked for an opinion when we are growing up. For all the fuss about child-centered education,

most of us pass through the education system without anyone asking us what should have been done better or not done at all. When they want our opinion, they told us crisply, they'd ask for it. But they never did.

Media literacy has to be learned and practised, so it may be that the proliferation in interactive radio and television will in time produce a more articulate population. When Radio 4's *Any Answers* changed its format from letter to phone-in, the decline in the quality of counterblasts was striking. The British write a fierce letter - brimstone is our natural mode. But we remain far too craven towards talk-show hosts to make the show truly interesting.

The nerveless Chris Evans evokes a kind of ritualised awe on his Virgin radio phone-in - not a development he has been at all anxious to stall. Typical caller: "I'm just calling to say I think you're reeeeeeeally great, Chris. And all my mates here in the widget factory in Walsall think so too. The show's brilliant." Mr Evans: "Thanks Bob from Walsall. What do you think about Gazza being left out of the squad?"

Caller: "I think what you said about it before was absolutely right Chris. Brilliant." The desire to receive the biscuit of approbation from the Man on the Radio remains tiresomely intact, even on those stations that pride themselves on their lack of condescension.

This constant desire to be nice and to earn niceness in return undermines the potential of chat radio to be a truly invigorating and listenable medium. In an unscientific study of talk shows throughout Europe, I found the Russians score highest for death-threats on air. I recommend St Petersburg radio, where there is none of that "I'm sorry, I have to cut you off there". The nighttime phone-in host responds to declarations of murderous intent with a weary, "Yeah, yeah. Next please."

The British are by far the most difficult listeners to move to anger. Talk Radio's thankfully short-lived experiment with shock-jocks failed not only because Caesar the Geezer was less sharp and anarchic than his American counterparts, but because his excesses failed to make people pick up the phone in response.

Coming from the non-shocking end of Talk Radio's guest list, I am intrigued and encouraged by the fact that what does get people phoning and talking are the 'big' themes. True, no producer would dream of announcing that tomorrow's subjects will be constitutional reform and libertarianism versus collective responsibility. But I have had lively discussion with listeners on other worthy subjects.

One topic was what sort of body should replace the House of Lords - an Athenian-style lottery - was hotly favoured above a Blairised quangoocracy. And then there was a session in which most of the callers wanted pornographers strung up, while objecting violently to the prospect of government infringing their right to receive hard-core Continental satellite porn in the living room.

I held out against porn on satellites despite a switchboard of red angry lights marked "disagree strongly". The isolation was terrible. Only Harold from Pinner agreed with me. Thank you Harold, I think you're reeeeeally great. Even if you did think I was Ann Widdicombe.

Welcome death of a Great African Dictator



DONU KOGBARA

Abacha was different. Immediately it became apparent that he was a sadist, a psychopath and a control freak

MOST NIGERIANS are overjoyed. All over the world, they are celebrating the sudden death on Monday of our president, General Sani Abacha.

He died young, in his prime. He was 54 and looked 45. Many of us gloomily assumed that he'd be around, making our lives a complete misery, for another decade at least. Many of those who actively opposed Abacha were regarded as heroes. But it was widely believed that they didn't stand a chance of getting rid of him.

And then a heart attack struck the Great African Dictator, out of the blue. Sure, there had been rumours about his health for ages. But nobody seriously believed that he'd croak this side of the millennium. And we simply cannot believe our luck.

Depressions have lifted. Champagne corks have been opened. Parties have been thrown. More are planned. If I was Mrs Abacha, I'd conceal the exact whereabouts of the grave - because there is a possibility that pilgrims will dance or spit on it.

Yes, it is unseemly and ghoulish - shameful and evil, even - to rejoice when any man dies. But, hell, we're only human. And, as Abacha himself proved, there is a dark side to human nature.

General Sani Abacha was, by far, the worst president Nigeria ever had, and that's saying something in a country which has been dominated by a series of military bootboys since it broke away from British colonial rule in 1960.

When Abacha grabbed the reins of power in 1993, some Nigerians were delighted because he had toppled a despised regime and was making altruistic noises. He said that he wouldn't stick around for long. He would just keep the throne warm until the country had prepared itself for the transition to democracy.

Supporters of MKO Abiola - a sociable, kind, clever millionaire whose presidential election victory had been annulled by Abacha's predecessors - felt that they had cause for optimism.

I was, in 1993 - and still am, in 1998 - a supporter of Abiola. And I'd have liked to believe that Abacha was capable of giving Abiola his due. But since Abiola was a taciturn, tight-lipped soldier with chilling, unsmiling eyes and access to lots and lots of tanks and truckloads of guns, I couldn't understand why so many people took his democratic promises seriously.

Abacha didn't strike me as the pluralistic type who would care about popularity and willingly step down for anybody. I expected him to cling to power for as long as he could. He turned out to be much, much worse. I hate to sound as if fascism is remotely acceptable. But you have to put things into perspective, and, if the truth be told, until Abacha

came along, Nigerian dictators had never been quite so thorough.

Sure, they were allergic to elections and the rule of law. Sure, they harassed their enemies. Sure, they weren't intellectuals with a firm grasp of economic theory. Sure, they looted the Treasury and enriched their relatives and hangers-on. Sure, they were so amazingly vulgar that it was hard to believe that many of them had been trained at Sandhurst.

But, during the pre-Abacha era, most Nigerians never felt truly oppressed. Nigeria never felt like Chile under General Pinochet or Uganda under General Idi Amin. Government critics didn't mysteriously disappear in the middle of the night. Journalists generally got away with whinging. And it was fine to make rude remarks about the authorities over a few beers in your favourite bar.

Until Abacha, Nigerian dictators were more laid-back than their counterparts in other countries, and some attracted genuine affection and respect.

Murtala Muhammed is remembered as a reformer. Gowon and Babangida were frequently described as nice guys, because they rarely resorted to cruelty, and tried hard to be genial and were almost democratic in their desire to be liked.

Abacha was different. Almost immediately, it became apparent that he was a sadist, psychopath and control freak. He took pleasure in humiliating, hurting and killing people. He had no conscience and never expressed remorse or guilt. He never listened to advice or reason. He had no real friends and hardly ever left his presidential fortress.

When he sentenced Ken Saro-Wiwa - the Ogoni writer and activist - to death after a kangaroo court



The late Nigerian leader Sani Abacha

hearing, the world was shocked. Africans often (unreasonably, in my opinion) resent "imperialistic" and "sancimonious" interventions from Europeans.

But this wasn't just a case of a whole bunch of patronising white folk telling Abacha what to do. Other African leaders condemned him. Nelson Mandela - a black icon - begged him to reconsider the terrible fate he planned for Ken.

Abacha was unmoved. While Mandela and other leaders were debating the issue at the Commonwealth Conference in New Zealand, Abacha hanged Ken, who had not been allowed to appeal against his sentence.

Abacha also ignored the Pope's request for the release of political prisoners. No wonder some people see his demise as his punishment from the Almighty.

Abacha did something no other Nigerian dictator has ever wanted to do. He frightened the hell out of Nigerians, who are notoriously noisy, irreverent, arrogant and uncrush-

able. He made us wear badges with his nasty little face on it.

When I went home at Christmas, everybody was talking about him in hushed tones. Critics looked over their shoulders nervously. Many gushed about the Great Leader's magnificence, refusing to meet your eye as they lied through their teeth.

It was like living in Big Brotherland. Now that he's dead, we are like delicious victims of post-dictator syndrome. Street vendors are giving away food for nothing. We have been holding our breaths for too long. Now we can exhale, with enormous relief, and echo the words of Martin Luther King: "Free at last, free at last, thank God we are free at last."

At long last, we've got our country back. Of course, utter chaos may ensue. And maybe Abacha's successor will not be a barrel of laughs.

But I stubbornly maintain, nobody could be as bad as Abacha. And I look forward to a brighter future for Nigeria.

THE INDEPENDENT

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Can care and custody be compatible?

IT IS timely to be asking the question "Can care and custody be compatible?"

There is certainly plenty of evidence that, too often, custody has resulted in a lack of care and failed to change young offenders' behaviour or attend to their development needs. But there have often been gross failures in non-custodial residential care.

Locking young people up does not in itself produce unsatisfactory regimes. There are Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) and local authority secure facilities where good work has gone on. What needs to be considered are the policies and structures that are likely to produce more constructive regimes than exist now.

The courts need to have powers to deal with the most serious and persistent young offenders, include the option of remanding and sentencing them to a secure placement.

But the time spent by a young person in such placements should not be an end in itself. It protects the public, but the fundamental aim of detaining a young offender, as

with a community sentence, should be to prevent offending in the long term, and the Government has made this aim specific in the Crime and Disorder Bill.

The Bill will provide courts with appropriate remand and sentencing powers to deal with the most serious and persistent young offenders. We should not delude ourselves; there are a significant number of young offenders who need to be detained. The number of offenders aged 15-17 sentenced by the courts to YOIs went up by a third between 1996 and 1997. This was the result of a large number of individual decisions that no other sentence was appropriate.

The Government made clear in its White Paper "No More Excuses" its belief that the present arrangements for providing and managing secure accommodation for juveniles are inefficient, incoherent and in need of reform.

Despite the efforts of staff in many establishments there is little positive to say about the present arrangements for youth custody as a whole.



NORMAN WARNER

Extract from a speech yesterday by the Home Secretary's Senior Policy Adviser to the National Children's Bureau

Regime standards are inconsistent. Costs vary considerably. Resources are inconsistently spread. Young offenders convicted of serious offences may find themselves accommodated in a local au-

thority secure unit at a cost of £2,500 a week each. Those sentenced to detention and training for lesser offences are not eligible for this service and are accommodated in Prison Service establishments at a cost of £400 a week. The Home Secretary's Task Force on Youth Justice, of which I am chair, has argued for these inconsistencies to be addressed.

The Government may well ask the Youth Justice Board to work with it in considering alternatives to the current range of provision of secure accommodation, and in particular whether there is a role for accommodation that offers a level of security somewhere between that of current secure provision and a non-secure children's home. This suggestion has been made by the Task Force whose members believe that there may be mileage in re-examining the security aspects of detention to see whether some current levels of security are appropriate.

The Government will make clear fairly soon how it intends to move forward in the

light of the Comprehensive Spending Review. In the meantime, however, there are already some substantial legislative developments in hand which will mean considerable changes in the way that young offenders are detained in future. These should ensure that there is far more emphasis on tackling the problem of offending behaviour, bearing in mind the young person's developmental needs and improving the through-care planning of their detention and release into the community.

I hope you will have noticed that I have managed so far without once using the terms "custody" or "custodial". The Task Force members have seen these terms as indicative of a non-developmental approach to young offenders, with overtones of warehousing. That is why we recommend to ministers the alternative terminology of detention and training which we hope will more usefully capture the spirit of what is intended in the future. We are detaining in order to train. That should be our approach.

هكذا من الأصل

Gordon is not up to his job



KEN LIVINGSTONE

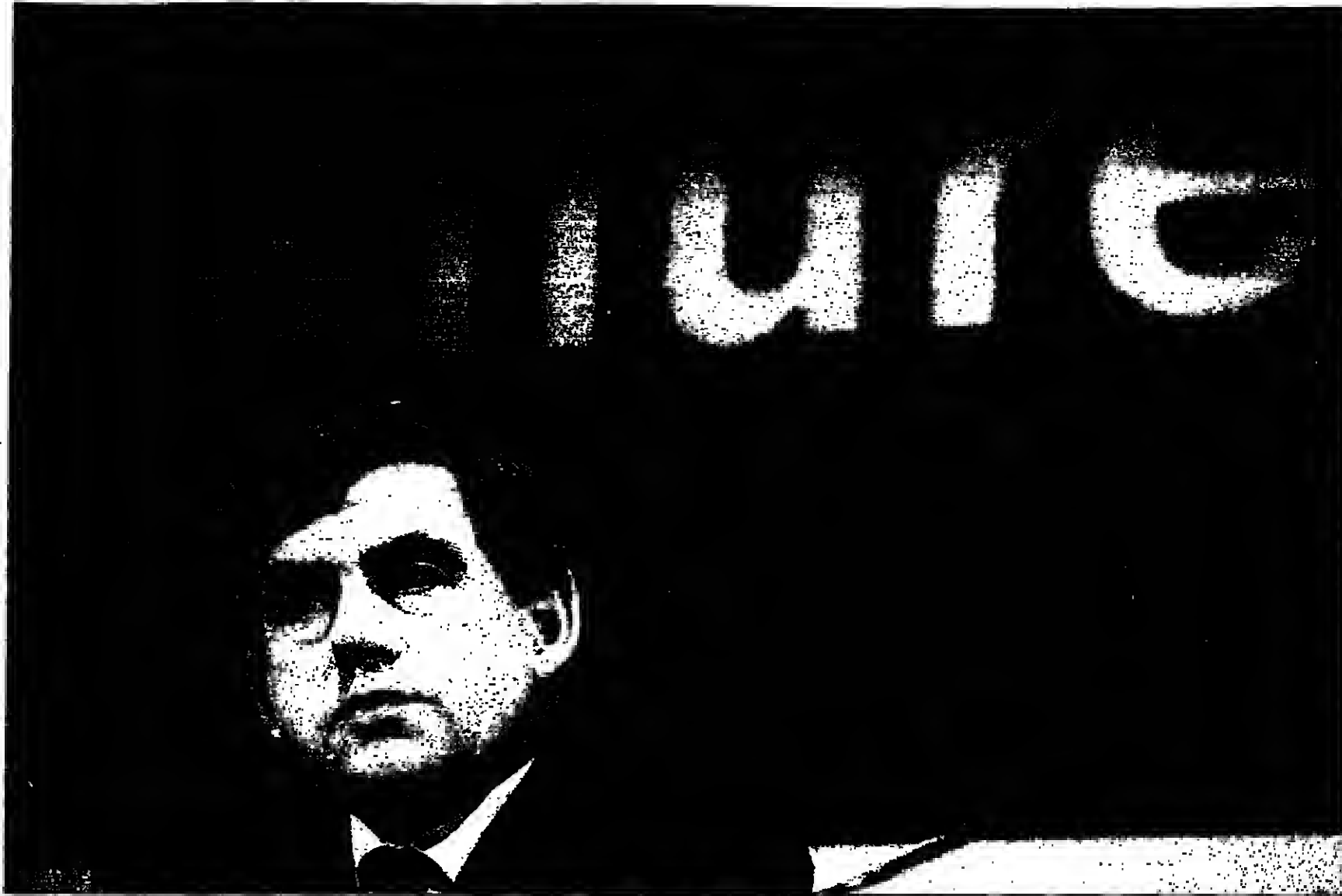
Britain is now heading towards a recession entirely of Gordon's making ... Quite clearly, he is not on top of macro-economic policy

ANYBODY READING the Sunday papers would have been in no doubt about the importance of Gordon Brown's first Cabinet reshuffle. We were told that he is actively blocking the promotion of Peter Mandelson to the Cabinet, and assured that he has saved Nick Brown from demotion from the post of chief whip and may even have secured the retention of Harriet Harman's services. References to Tony Blair were little more than walk-on roles in this unfolding drama of how Gordon is reconstructing the Government.

Nor is Gordon merely concerned with reshuffling his Government. Well-placed sources assured us that he is intervening firmly to ensure that the minimum wage does not apply to the young and has slapped down Margaret Beckett's determination to endorse the low pay commission's recommendation of £3.60 an hour. Apparently Gordon feels this is too generous, and he is determined that nothing should damage the implementation of his fair deal welfare to work proposals. Clearly Tony Blair must have been holidaying in Ireland recently, as he didn't feature in this great drama of the minimum wage, according to sources close to the Chancellor.

Over the last 12 months, political commentators and senior civil servants have frequently referred to the quite unique power base of this Chancellor. There is certainly no precedent in recent times for a chancellor wielding such disproportionate power. There was certainly no such situation during the Second World War when Winston Churchill excluded the chancellor from his war cabinet on the grounds that the chancellor's job was simply to find the money to give expression to the decisions it made. How some Cabinet members must wish such a situation prevailed today, as they struggle to defend their budgets in the public spending review.

The source of this unique balance of power within the Government arises from the days immediately following the death of John Smith. Contrary to his expectations Gordon awoke on the day following John Smith's death to see that every opinion poll



Gordon Brown: Mismanaging the economy but still thinks he can be leader of the party

showed Tony Blair comfortably ahead of all other contenders as the public's choice for leader. The senior partner of Labour's "golden boys" was still recovering from Britain's eviction from the ERM. Gordon, as Shadow Chancellor, had refused to call for devaluation throughout the summer of 1992 and had even published an article rejecting devaluation on the very morning of the ERM débâcle.

Coupled with a series of brutal internal party rows about Labour's previous public spending commitments, in which Gordon had bludgeoned the reluctant Shadow Cabinet into accepting the slaughter of many of Labour's most deeply felt commitments, the leadership contest could not have come at a worse possible time. Gordon's popularity was at its lowest ebb.

The rest of this story has been well-rehearsed, with Gordon reluctantly agreeing to drop out of the contest in Tony's favour, but still convinced that he could have won if he had gone ahead. What causes the Labour Party its current problems at the top is the circumstances in which Gordon withdrew, at the famous meeting in Islington's Granita restaurant.

The terms of Gordon's withdrawal were formally committed to writing in a memorandum subsequently agreed between their staffs. Under the terms of this agreement Gordon was to be left in control of economic policy.

It was a major error of judgement on Tony Blair's part to strike such an agree-

ment. There were no circumstances in which Gordon could have won, and Tony did not need to agree the delegation of economic policy. I suspect that Tony's motivation was unduly influenced by consideration for Gordon's feelings. That's all very nice, of course, but the Government can have only one Prime Minister and the conduct of economic policy is so central to the success of any government that the Prime Minister has to have prime direction of economic policy.

Of course, this would largely be a matter of idle gossip if economic policy were going well. Unfortunately, Gordon's economic misjudgements are the major factor threatening our chance of gaining a second term in office. Any Labour government depends on creating a strong manufacturing sector capable of providing work for its supporters and exports to sustain our balance of trade. Yet Gordon has pursued a policy of subservience to the interests of the financial sector of which Norman Lamont or Nigel Lawson would have been proud.

The Bank of England having been granted independence to set interest rates, there was only one way to influence the Bank to reduce interest rates and create favourable conditions for investment. This was through a package of tax increases aimed at damping down the overheated consumer demand and we inherited from Ken Clarke's pre-election boom.

Instead Gordon chose a package of tax increases that leave consumer spending

unscathed and will, if anything, further depress our already miserable rate of investment. The City is, of course, delighted. Interest rates have increased, thus guaranteeing big bonuses in the City. The pound has soared, which means that we'll all have wonderfully cheap foreign holidays. But, sadly, many workers will return home to find that they have been laid off because their firm can no longer export goods in these circumstances.

An insight into Gordon's subservience to the City comes from an examination of the credentials of those he has appointed to the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England. How on earth a Labour chancellor could feel that a former CIA employee would be of value in pursuing Labour's wider agenda on the MPC is a matter that "passeth all understanding". In all his other appointments he has chosen inflation hawks from the academic world, none of whom has ever run a company or sold anything in his life. It beggars belief that a Labour Chancellor has been able to find people even more reactionary than the professional central bankers such as Eddie George and his subordinates, who have so far tried to moderate the interest-rate knee-jerk responses of Gordon's appointees.

The end result of this charade is that Britain is now heading towards an unnecessary recession entirely of Gordon's making. If he had followed the advice of others and damped down consumer spend-

ing in his first mini-budget, we could have seen a slow-down in growth and opened the way for major reductions in interest rates which would have been the spur to a long period of investment-led growth in the run-up to the next election.

The Labour Party and those who depend on us would be prepared to display an amused tolerance of Gordon's long-term campaign to succeed Tony Blair, if he were getting the economy right. If Gordon wants to waste his own money entertaining trade union and Labour Party members at receptions in No 11 in an attempt to build support for a leadership election which may be 20 years away, then that is purely a matter for him. But, quite clearly, Gordon is not on top of macro-economic policy.

No one denies that Gordon is a man of immense talent and ability, but his particular skill is an attention to detail. The scale of involvement he has shown in the welfare to work programme is wholly admirable, and typical of his workaholic nature. But these are the skills which would equip him to be a brilliant secretary of state for education or social security. A Chancellor needs to be able to grasp the grand picture, to have an almost instinctive feel for the huge sweep of movements in the global economy. In the coming Cabinet reshuffle the one move that most urgently needs to be made is the one that Tony Blair's bizarre prenuptial agreement at Granita prevents him from doing: moving his Chancellor to another job.

RIGHT OF REPLY

MICK JAGGER



The decision to cancel concerts was forced on us, says the lead singer of the Rolling Stones

WE ARE very disappointed to have to postpone our British concerts. But following the decision to change the tax laws retrospectively and tax Britons who spend most of the year out of the country, we would have run our entire European tour at a considerable loss. I should stress that we were not using a tax loophole. The scheme was set up by Denis Healey, a Labour chancellor, and has been in use for two decades. There was nothing clandestine about it and it is used by a wide variety of people working overseas.

Whatever the Treasury says, these changes are being introduced retrospectively. This is highly unusual. The government has every right to change the tax laws but we would have expected the new regulations to come into effect at the end of the tax year, not in the middle.

Our tax adviser said the band and 40 members of the road crew would face a huge tax bill. We offered to play the UK shows for charity but the Revenue rejected the suggestion. So we were forced to make a decision: either Charlie, Ronnie and myself were to swallow an unexpected £12m tax bill, putting the tour into the red, or postponing the dates.

It is not just the band who are affected. Our crew signed up on the basis that their earnings would be free of tax in Britain because they were hardly in the country. Already the manager of an American act has told us they may not hire British technicians because they won't want to work in the UK, which is a vital part of any European tour. This was a very difficult decision for us, and it is not a tax protest.

Another man on a white horse

RUSSIA IS in such a mess that even the army does not want a coup d'état. The commanders might feel more rebellious if they could rely on the forces at their disposal. But the Russian Army is a shambles.

The Chechen volunteers humbled them in the mid-1990s, and Russian generals have shown more enthusiasm for trading weapons on the black market than for fighting. They even sold to the Chechens. Army officers, once the most flamboyant of all castes in the Soviet state hierarchy, now go round in civilian clothes when they are off duty. Demoralisation is complete.

Just one ex-military man, Alexander Lebed, has held his self-respect and the respect of many Russian voters. In 1996 he came a creditable third in the presidential election and is planning to run again when Boris Yeltsin's term of office ends.

Lebed breaks the rules of the world's mass media. He speaks his mind. Indeed, he shoots his mouth off on one occasion he lauded the achievements of General Pinochet as Chilean dictator. He does not mind contradicting himself. When he was in Afghanistan, he imposed discipline by lining up 11 of his officers and punching each of them in the face.

Lebed has made a virtue out of his devil-may-care style. It is as if a character had leaped from the pages of one of Tolstoy's novels and burst into 20th-century reality.

But there is more to him than meets the eye. When he was put in charge of the XIV Army in Moldova in 1992, he managed to stop conflict between Russians and Moldovans; and in 1996, after Yeltsin had bought his support by making him security supreme, Lebed did much to bring peace to Chechnya. Russian voters like Lebed not just because he embodies the stereotype of the bluff ex-soldier but also because he has campaigned to end conflict by negotiation and to eliminate corruption.

WEDNESDAY BOOK

THE GENERAL AGAINST THE KREMLIN
BY HAROLD ELLESTON. LITTLE, BROWN, £17.50

Once upon a time, Boris Yeltsin had the same image, and it did not take a genius to guess that he would get rid of Lebed as soon as his usefulness faded. The fact that the Chechen negotiators trusted Lebed more than Yeltsin made matters worse. And so the President, having lured his rival into complacency by implying that Lebed was his preferred successor, suddenly removed him from his post.

Yeltsin's excuse was that Lebed could not function as a member of a government team. Thus the pot

sacked the kettle. But Lebed has responded by standing successfully. In April this year, for the leadership of the Krasnoyarsk regional administration. This lively and informative book puts the case for Lebed, using evidence from recent interviews with prominent Russian politicians.

Harold Elleston, Conservative MP for Blackpool North until last year, argues that Russia has been badly misruled in the past decade. One of the author's idiosyncrasies is his fondness for the plotters who conspired against Gorbachev in the August 1991 coup. He

even obtained an interview with none other than the former Vice-President of the USSR, Gennadi Yanaev, the drunkard whose nervous TV performance at the beginning of the coup stiffened resistance to the plotters. Why does Elleston warm to Yanaev? Perhaps there is some fellow feeling between the two ousted conservatives.

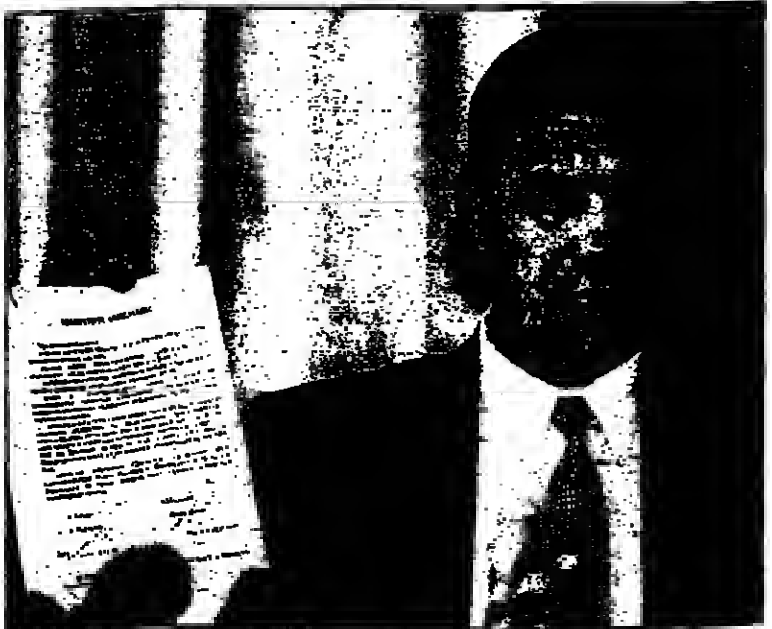
Yet Elleston has undoubtedly uncovered significant testimony about the events of August 1991, in the most intriguing part of his book. He shows that Lebed, who had operational duties in Moscow at the time, did little to sustain Gorbachev in power. The book's underlying theme is that Gorbachev and Yeltsin are political tricksters and that the time has come for Lebed to pull the country into shape.

But why trust the General? Even the author concedes that Alexander Lebed took money and advice from Yeltsin's aides in the 1996 election while claiming to be an independent. Lebed might speak plainly, but he does not always tell the truth. He has also picked up some dubious associates: among them is Yeltsin's former chief bodyguard and drinking partner Alexander Korzhakov, notorious for wishing to cancel the 1996 election in case Yeltsin did not win.

Harold Elleston defends Lebed as a person with whom the West might do business. But many questions are left unanswered, and even unasked, in the course of his book. The West has a sorry record of backing losers, including charlatans, in Russia. The game of picking winners is a gamble even for Russian voters. But it is their game to play. Then it will at least be their fault if they lose.

ROBERT SERVICE

The reviewer is Professor of Russian History and Politics in London University. His Penguin History of Twentieth-Century Russia will appear in paperback in July.



Alexander Lebed has held his self-respect.

WEDNESDAY POEM

EVERYTHING CHANGES

BY BERTOLT BRECHT.
IN A VERSION BY
CICELY HERBERT

Everything changes. We plant trees for those born later but what's happened has happened and poisons poured into the seas cannot be drained out again.

What's happened has happened. Poisons poured into the seas cannot be drained out again, but everything changes. We plant trees for those born later. Bargains, bargains in and out of reason!

Our poems today and tomorrow come from the latest batch of Poems on the Underground. The 15 poems by major modern European poets, which will appear in London tube carriages throughout June and July, mark the British presidency of the European Union.

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General Sani Abacha

FEW NIGERIANS, and the many people involved in Commonwealth or international affairs and in human rights movements, remained indifferent to the impression made on them by General Sani Abacha, Nigeria's seventh military head of state.

At one end of the spectrum of political perception he recalled the unspeakable African shame that was Idi Amin or the bogeyman that was Sese Soko Mobutu. At the other extreme, while lacking the patent honesty and "Good Old Jack" bonhomie of the earlier General Gowon or the breathtaking wizardry in selling the past of his immediate predecessor, General Ibrahim Babangida, Abacha represented the strong leader who alone might restore an unruly and divided Nigeria to a level of political stability and economic sustainability consistent with its expectations and potential on the continent.

His *annus horribilis* was 1995, when the brutal execution of the political activist and acclaimed writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, on the eve of the meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) in New Zealand, generated a highly condemnatory reaction to the ugly lack of human rights in Nigeria. It was abruptly and uniquely suspended from the Commonwealth, a stigma revisited by CHOGM when it re-assembled in Edinburgh in October 1997 and reiterated its condemnation of the Abacha regime.

Sani Abacha was born in 1943 in a Hausa-Fulani quarter in Kano to a merchant family of Kanuri descent, and educated at Kano Provincial Secondary School from 1957 to 1962. Like so many of his able and ambitious peers, he joined the army. It was a time when the younger generation of educated Nigerians saw the military as offering a more rapid route to elite status than the civil service or business. Passing out of the Nigerian Military Training Centre at Kaduna in 1963, he was sent to the UK for officer cadet training at Mons. He was also commissioned in 1963.

Thereafter promotion was as regular as Aldershot drill parades: to lieutenant in 1966, to captain one year and then to major two years later, with a pause of seven years in the rank of colonel until he was made brigadier in 1989.

Abacha had just turned 40 when he was promoted general. Too junior to have seen much command service in the Biafran War (1967-70), he improved his military qualifications by attending the School of Infantry at Warminster in 1971, the Nigerian Staff College at Jaji in 1976, and in 1981 the prestigious Nigerian Institute of Political Studies (NIPS) at Kuru. Finally, he attended the US Senior International Defense Course at Monterey, California.

Every inch the professional and

promising soldier, in his 25 years of military service Abacha was to hold at one time or another all the influential posts in the Nigerian army from GSO and Brigade Commander to the higher echelons of AQMG, Director of Army Training, GOC 2nd Mechanical Division, and Chief of Staff. But, as Nigerians came to realise in 1983, there was more to this uncharismatic and reserved young officer than his outward façade of single-minded professionalism. When General Buhari overthrew the ill-fated Second Republic of Shehu Shagari in December 1983, it was Abacha who announced the Buhari coup over the radio in words that spoke far more than they said: "I, Brigadier Sani Abacha..." He was appointed to the ruling Supreme Military Council.

Abacha had a brutal contempt for democracy at home and a miserable record on human rights. It must be in his legacy rather than in his leadership that the true worth of Nigeria under its ninth head of state in 38 years will in the end be revealed

Two years on, in another of those West African coups that seemed to draw strength from the public holiday paralysis of the Christmas/New Year shut-down, Abacha was once again deeply involved, this time in the overthrow of General Buhari and the coming to power of General Babangida. He was rewarded by promotion to Major-General, appointment as Army Chief of Staff, and membership of the new Armed Forces Ruling Council.

Emerging unscathed from Babangida's officers' purge of late 1993, Abacha was to play an important role in scotching the dangerous mutiny with its overtones of ethnic secessionism, led by Major Oskar in Lagos in April 1990. The Head of State himself narrowly escaped assassination.

Abacha's preference for the shadows rather than the limelight meant that he was not a high-profile figure in the Babangida regime. Following Babangida's serially postponed handover dates (leading one eminent Nigerianist scholar punningly to describe the seemingly aimless transition programme as "Transition Without End"), and in the aftermath of the debacle of the so-called Abacha general election of July 1993, Babangida was eventually induced to hand over the administration to an

interim national government (ING) headed by the businessman Ernest Shonekan. To the surprise of many, Abacha was given a post as Minister of Defence in the new administration.

After less than a hundred days in office, Shonekan suddenly announced his resignation on 17 November. It was to Sani Abacha that he transferred power, thereby confirming the widespread belief that not only was this the third coup d'état masterminded by Abacha, but that this enigmatic *éménence grise* had in reality been the power behind the ING ever since it had taken office.

On the very next day Abacha dismantled all the organs of state so elaborately created during the Transition era. He replaced the civilian governors with military administrators. Conventionally for incoming

Meeting taking place in Auckland, New Zealand, approved the unprecedented step of suspending Nigeria (expulsion is not in their remit) from the Commonwealth. In the months that followed Canada replaced President Mandela as the leading critic of Abacha's Nigeria.

The *ad hoc* Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) did not find its mission an easy one, and African members perceptibly began to close ranks behind Nigeria and accept the transition programme for 1998. At the same time, there was a movement within Nigeria (whether inspired or genuinely grassroots) to persuade Abacha either to stand for Presidential office in 1998 - the "from uniform to *ogbona*" model of Mobutu and Rawlings - or to prolong his present military rule.

Reluctant to travel much, whether inside or outside Nigeria, Abacha was one of the personally lesser known Nigerian Heads of State. In contrast, among Nigeria's First Ladies, his wife, Maryam Jiddah, whom he married in 1985, adopted an unusually high profile in public affairs and international conferences. She initiated Nigeria's Family Support Programme, and went on to earn the sobriquet of "The Crusading First Lady" for her role in chairing in 1997 the first summit of Africa's First Ladies.

The eventual success of ECO-MOG, the Economic Community's Monitoring Group (on the event, a major military force), in bringing peace to war-torn Liberia, was followed earlier this year by Abacha ordering his troops into Sierra Leone to help restore the ousted President Kabbah, ironically presenting General Abacha as upholding military intervention in the name of democracy which he significantly failed to practice at home.

Rumours of Abacha's serious illness first circulated in September 1997 but they were quickly denied. His brutal contempt for democracy at home, combined with his deepening isolation on the international scene on account of his miserable record on human rights, meant that despite the campaign for him to stand for the presidency in 1998, Abacha died with a low level of popularity ratings to his credit. It must be in his legacy rather than in his leadership that the true worth of Nigeria under its ninth head of state in 38 years will in the end be revealed.

Anthony Kirk-Greene

Sani Abacha, soldier and head of state: born Kano, Nigeria 20 September 1943; President of Nigeria and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces 1993-98; married 1985 Maryam Jiddah (nine children, and one son deceased); died Abuja 8 June 1998.



Cardinal Agostino Casaroli

CARDINAL AGOSTINO Casaroli was the Vatican's top diplomat for more than a decade and, despite being in the mould of Pope Paul VI, spent a further decade, from 1979 to 1990, as Secretary of State under the very different Pope John Paul II. Casaroli's famed long view led him to forge controversial agreements with Eastern European governments which he considered necessary to ensure the Catholic Church's survival under repressive regimes (not so much a *modus vivendi* as a *modus non moriendi*, he once ironically put it). But these agreements were fiercely opposed by those who saw him as selling out to the Communist regimes and he earned the nickname "Casaroli the Communist". Casaroli rejected charges that he was prepared to forge such agreements at any price as "unjust, even slanderous". As times changed he was dubbed "Monsignor Perestroika" by the Italian media.

Although, to the wake of Pope Paul's funeral in 1978, Casaroli privately assured the Polish religious affairs minister that the election of a new pope would not mean a change in the Vatican's Ostpolitik, Cardinal Karol Wojtyla's election as Pope John Paul II must have come as a shock. But the new Pope's endorsement of Casaroli - viewed by many in the Polish Church as a traitor for negotiating with the Communists - heralded an unlikely partnership between the impulsive pope and the cautious diplomat.

Pope John Paul confirmed Casaroli as Secretary of the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church, the Vatican's "foreign ministry". In April 1979 he appointed him Secretary of State (in effect prime minister) to replace the recently deceased Cardinal Jean Villot. Casaroli became a cardinal in the Pope's first consistory two months later.

Pope John Paul overturned the



cautious Vatican policy, welcoming contacts with Communist regimes while more aggressively championing the Church's rights. Casaroli soon adapted to the new Vatican regime and became a trusted colleague of the Pope, especially in the attempt to fend off a Soviet crackdown in Poland and the suppression of the Solidarity trade union. During

the tense stand-off in 1980, the Pope chose Casaroli to act as his envoy in secret meetings with Kremlin officials to keep lines of communication open.

In the wake of the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul in May 1981, Casaroli kept the Vatican running smoothly. In the wake of the scandals surrounding the Vatican Bank, Casaroli played a crucial be-

hind-the-scenes role restoring the Vatican's credibility in financial matters. A duty Casaroli found a trial was accompanying the Pope on his frequent foreign travels, taking him away from what he considered more useful work at his desk.

Despite his certain reservations, Casaroli was the messenger when the Pope moved against what he saw as the untrustworthy Jesuits in October 1981. The Jesuit General Pedro Arrupe had just suffered a stroke and the Pope stepped in to halt the election of a successor and impose his own personal delegate to run the order. Casaroli delivered the Pope's letter in person to the paralysed Arrupe as he lay in bed at the Jesuit Curia, reducing the sick man to tears.

But Casaroli's triumphs came in the international arena. The immense political changes in Eastern Europe and above all in Moscow saw Casaroli vindicated. In 1988 Pope John Paul chose him to head the Vatican delegation to the Russian Orthodox Church's celebrations of the Millennium of Christianity, armed with a six-page letter from the Pope to the Soviet leader. After a four-day wait in a Moscow hotel, Casaroli was taken the short ride to the Kremlin in a KGB car to hand over the letter to Mikhail Gorbachev and foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze. They had a cordial discussion, although it would be more than a year before the Pope got his reply.

This rapprochement allowed Casaroli to crown his career with the historic meeting between Pope John Paul and Gorbachev in the Vatican on 1 December 1989, the first between a pope and a Communist Party general secretary. Casaroli stepped down as Secretary of State exactly one year after the meeting.

Casaroli was an advocate of the Holy See, using its diplomatic position to the full. At his initiative the Vatican

played a full part in the 1975 Helsinki Conference, insisting that firm wording be inserted on human rights and religious freedom, took part in nuclear disarmament negotiations and even brokered an agreement between Chile and Argentina over the Beagle Channel territorial dispute. Born a tailor's son in northern Italy, Casaroli followed a family tradition of entering the priesthood. After seminary studies in Bedonia and Pi-

Communist regimes after years of conflict and mistrust, a policy continued by Pope Paul VI, and Casaroli was brought in.

He was appointed Secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs (shortly to be renamed the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church) in July 1967 and was consecrated archbishop by Pope Paul in St Peter's the same month. Casaroli's expertise on Eastern

Secret negotiations in Prague in 1966 got bogged down as Czechoslovakia - one of the most restrictive countries for the Catholic Church - resisted any concessions.

In 1971 Casaroli became the first senior Vatican personality to pay an official visit to the Soviet Union, using the excuse of putting the Vatican's signature on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to force a meeting with officials of the Council for Religious Affairs, the Soviet government body that controlled religious groups. Casaroli's pleas for greater rights for Catholics in the Soviet Union fell on suspicious and deaf ears, but he was upbeat: "After 50 years of monologue we have progressed to dialogue."

Casaroli was calm but resolute in negotiations, with the necessary infinite patience. Recently revealed records of his meetings with Communist bureaucrats show him doggedly refusing to be sidetracked into meaningless generalities and politely but insistently returning to issues of substance.

Aware that his life within the Vatican walls and on diplomatic missions was sheltered, Casaroli made time to escape the enclosed world. He made regular pastoral visits to prisoners in the Casal del Marmo youth reformatory near Rome.

Despite his image as a self-effacing curial bureaucrat, Casaroli was friendly and approachable with an inner ebullience. He was a master of the self-deprecating remark.

Felix Corley

Agostino Casaroli, priest and diplomat: born Castel Giovanni, Piacenza, Italy 24 November 1914; ordained priest 1937, archbishop 1967, cardinal 1979; Secretary of the Council for the Public Affairs of the Catholic Church 1967-79; Secretary of State to Pope John Paul II 1979-90; died Rome 9 June 1998.

هكذا من الأصل

Marion Milner

MARION MILNER was a prominent independent psychoanalyst and writer. She was trained as a psychologist, and worked in industry and in schools. Her interest in the unconscious grew from her personal approach to a vague sense of dissatisfaction; she kept a diary in which she recorded as honestly as she could her stream of consciousness.

She discovered by this method aspects of herself which she had previously denied - pettiness, vanity, fear and anger. She published a trio of books in which she revealed these feelings and discoveries. The first of these, *A Life of One's Own* (1984), is a particularly good introduction to her thinking and to the ways in which one person's self-deceptions were brought to light.

One of her central interests was the "Suppressed Madness of Sane Men", the title of a collection of papers published in 1987. This madness is, in her view, a matter of being cut off from the instincts and the body. It was her contention that the hard-won mental and emotional achievements of separation - of self from other, of feelings from things, of symbols from things symbolised - can be overvalued.

For many reasons we may cling to the raft of logical thinking in fear of the rough seas of imagination. In Freud's terms, secondary process thinking seems to drive out primary process. One reason for such an absolute solution would be having a mother who is emotionally ill: "such a human environment forces the child into a desperate clinging to the phase of thinking that... distinguishes between the 'me' and the 'not-me', because this is the only protection against an impossible confusion between their own and their parents' problem."

Psychoanalysis, Milner argued, is one area where such one-sidedness may be undone. It offers a space in which it is safe to be absent-minded and illogical; the transference itself involves illusion, and in fostering and working on this illusion, the analyst enables the over-sane person to allow something to be what it is and be another thing. "The recurrent merging with the object through the blurring of boundaries... must precede the creation of symbols."

She stressed the healthy aspect of such regressions, and the need for constant oscillations between such states of mind and the more logical, differentiating, practical, common-sense states which are also of course essential. The true self can be restored by

the growth of the capacities of imagination and symbolisation.

Milner underlined the need to imbue the common-sense world with one's personal sense of meaning. She described this process as the alchemy which transmutes base metal into gold. This requires a sacrifice of the old self and a plunge into emptiness, from which one develops a trust that, out of the unconscious, something new and valuable can grow. These lines of thought led on to other interests of Milner's - the role of art and poetry in the life of the mind, and mysticism.

She was also a talented painter, and

Milner's style was entirely hers. Every paragraph had her own stamp on it; she wrote in long sentences, letting thoughts develop and ramify almost as if she were speaking an inner dialogue aloud

in *On Not Being Able to Paint* (1950) she wrote an important book on creativity and on some of the forces that prevent it. As with so much of her writing, she was not afraid to reveal herself. Her authorial voice was itself an instance of her view that "the internal gesture needed is to stand aside". *The Hands of the Living God* (1989), an account of a 20-year analysis, also focused on drawings and doodles, this time her patients'.

Milner's style was entirely hers. Every paragraph had her own stamp on it; she wrote in long sentences, letting thoughts develop and ramify almost as if she were speaking an inner dialogue aloud. At times the tone of what she wrote could move close to the ecstatic - a characteristic that may have been, in part, an expression of something she often regretted in her-



self, her never quite having reached to the deeper levels of her anger.

Right to the end of her life she retained a psychoanalytic attitude to herself and others, wondering if hurt blood vessels in her eye a year or so ago were the result of unconscious anger. She wished she had lived late enough to benefit from the more sophisticated understandings of modern psychoanalysis. But she was also aware of the limits of psychoanalysis, especially in regard to the body.

Her last years were, physically, a struggle against increasing deafness, blindness and wobbliness; but her mind was wonderfully alive till the very end, her warmth, curiosity, humour and interest in other people intact. At the age of 93, she asked me to help her on to the swing in our garden, saying she hadn't been on a swing

for 60 years. She remained beautiful, and was always elegant, in her idiosyncratic, many-layered, textured and harmonious way.

It was a tremendous privilege and enrichment to be one of her friends. Our loss will be a little mitigated by the fact that there is another book to come: *Bothered by Alligators* will be an analysis of herself as a mother through her study of the illustrated story-book of her son, John, which he made when he was seven. Marion Milner had more or less finished this final act of love and reparation, and was, perhaps, ready to die.

Michael Brearley

Nina Marion Blackett, training analyst, artist and author; born London 1 February 1900; married 1927 Dennis Milner (died 1954; two sons); died London 29 May 1998.

SCIENCE NOTES

JOHN TURNER

The myth of Frankenstein

OUR CHILDREN learn that professors are mad around the time they start reading the *Beano*, imbibing a tradition that goes back to the alchemists. But the 19th century gave us the most memorable mad scientist of all, Victor Frankenstein.

Mary Shelley's laboratory-bound obsessive, first introduced to agreeably scandalised readers in 1818, had one thing in common with his successors. He was a primitive biologist. And though the 20th century has spawned enough power-crazed physicists to keep Dr Strangelove company, our favourite scary scientists still tend to be test-tube baby makers, genetic engineers and closet cloners.

Biology evokes our deepest ambivalence about the scientific project. We would love to control life, and finally break the bounds of the clumsily designed bodies and minds which evolution built, yet the stronger our desire to overcome our imperfections, the greater our dread of real choices about our future make-up.

This double-bind at the heart of Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* has spawned endless retellings, which make it one of our most resonant modern myths.

It is a myth that modern biologists hate. Those who splice genes and fertilise eggs in petri dishes believe that the endurance of *Frankenstein* is due to second-rate writers pandering to public fears and perpetuating cheap stereotypes. They are wrong. The myth is not a straightforward anti-science story. Our sympathies are often drawn to the good doctor's creation, originally dubbed the "creature", but, since Boris Karloff's stunning screen portrayal in the Thirties, seen as Frankenstein's "monster". Yet we are engaged by the creator, too. There is something admirable about Victor Frankenstein in the novel, about "Henry" Frankenstein in James Whale's classic Thirties film - even to Peter Cushing's ruthless Baron Frankenstein in Hammer's Fifties and Sixties films. The myth expresses an ambivalence about science that colours our view of flesh-and-blood biologists. But it grips us, to the extent that we share their motives.

This is one reason why the myth has so often been useful when people have struggled to make sense of real biology. *Frankenstein* loomed large in Britain



Awful warning: Frankenstein's monster

when Victorian physiologists took up vivisection, and in the US when the embryologist Jacques Loeb claimed, at the turn of this century, that artificial fertilisation of sea-urchin eggs meant that laboratory-created life was imminent. The story was often used by commentators on the "biological revolution" of the Sixties, in the days of the Pill, heart transplants, mind-bending drugs, the cracking of the genetic code. It is now invoked to express our concerns about cloned sheep and designer babies.

However, as such concerns become real rather than fictional, a 200-year-old myth, however artfully reworked, is a poor grounding for debate. It can too easily be used to suggest that we must accept all science, or none. Recently, scientists have been quick to use it in this way, to raise the rhetorical stakes in defence, for example, of experiments with embryos.

This won't do. Neither will reference to *Frankenstein* as an awful warning by opponents of some project or other. Control of life has moved from being a novelist's notion to the objective of a whole set of real-world technologies. We did ask for them. Our desire, it appears, outweighs our dread. But we will still strive to curb some applications of the life science while encouraging others. For that effort, perhaps, we need new stories, posing more subtle choices.

John Turner is author of *Frankenstein's Footsteps: science, genetics and popular culture* (Yale University Press, £19.99)

GAZETTE

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen visits Sir James Barrie School, London SW8; visits the swimming pool and meets swimmers at the Battersea Technology College, London SW11; inaugurates the closed circuit television system for Wandsworth town centre, at Arding and Hobbs Department Store, London SW11; and, as Patron, Shaftesbury Homes and "Aethusa", visits the Winstanley Road Children's Home, London SW11. The Duke of Edinburgh, President, chairs a meeting of the Royal Mint Advisory Committee at Buckingham Palace; and attends the Scotland versus Brazil World Cup football match at the Stade de France, Paris. The Duke of York visits the Bank of England, London EC2. The Princess Royal, President, British Olympic Association, attends the National Olympic Committee Meeting and the Annual General Meeting at the Café Royal, London W1; and, as Commandant-in-Chief (Ambulance and Nursing Cadets), the Order of St John, gives a reception for Grand Prior Cadets at Buckingham Palace.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; Nijmegen Company Grenadier Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £5.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements are charged at £10 a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

The Duke of Edinburgh, 77; Mr Brian Baldock, former deputy chairman, Guinness plc, 64; Mr William Barr, former Rector, Exeter College, Oxford, 81; Mr Saul Bellows, writer and Nobel prizewinner, 83; The Right Rev Leslie Brown, former Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, 86; Mr Gordon Burns, television producer and presenter, 56; Sir Bryan Cartledge, former Principal of Lincoln College, Oxford, 67; Sir Christopher Collett, former Lord Mayor of London, 67; Mr Peter Crampton, MEP, 66; Mr Robert Dewar, Ambassador to Madagascar, 49; Sir Brinsley Ford, former chairman, National Art Collections Fund, 90; Sir Peter Gibson, a former Lord Justice of Appeal, 64; Mr Graham Carleton Greene, publisher, 62; Sir William Gordon Harris, civil engineer, 85; Mr Guy Harwood, racehorse trainer, 59; Miss June Haver, actress, 71; Sir Arthur Hawkins, former chairman, CEBG, 85; Dr Polly Hill, anthropologist, 84; Mr Lindsay Hoyle MP, 41; Mr Lionel Jeffries, actor, 72; Mr Simon Jenkins, columnist, and former editor of the Times, 56; Sir Geoffrey Otton, former senior civil servant, 71; Mr Thomas Pendry MP, 64; Mr Maurice Sendak, writer and illustrator, 70; Mr Bill Waddington, actor and comedian, 82; Maj Gen Michael Walsh, former Chief Scout, 71.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: James Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender, 1688; James Short, optician and astronomer, 1710; Charles Simon Catel, composer, 1773; Clara Anastasia Novello, soprano, 1818; Gustave Courbet, painter, 1819; Sir Edwin Arnold, poet, 1832; Nikolaus August Otto, inventor of the four-stroke internal combustion engine, 1832; Jean Joseph Benjamin Con-

stant, painter, 1845; André Derain, painter, 1880; Al Dubin, lyricist, 1891; Frederick Loewe, composer, 1901; Robert Skell, composer, 1910; Sir Terence Mervyn Rattigan, playwright, 1911; Judy Garland (Frances Ethel Gumm), singer and actress, 1922; Ian Robert Maxwell (Jan Ludvik Hoch), chairman, Mirror Group, 1923; Deaths: Frederick I, Barbossa, Holy Roman Emperor, 1190; Luis Vaz de Camões, poet, 1580; George I, King, 1727; Thomas Hearne, antiquary, 1735; Louis-Jean-François Lagrenée, painter, 1805; André-Marie Ampère, physicist, 1836; Frederick Yeates Hursthouse, painter, 1889; Ernest Chausson, composer, 1899; Richard John Seddon, statesman, at sea 1906; Pierre Loti (Louis-Marie-Julien Vlaud), novelist and naval officer, 1923; Giacomo Matteotti, socialist leader, assassinated 1924; Antonio Gaudi y Cornet, architect, 1928; Frederick Theodore Albert Delius, composer, 1934; Spencer Tracy, actor, 1967; Henry Duke of Gloucester, 1974. On this day: the first of the witches of Salem was hanged in Massachusetts, 1692; the first Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race was rowed, and was won by Oxford, 1829; the Crystal Palace at Sydenham near London was officially opened, 1854; Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde* was first produced, Munich, 1855; the Battle of Belleau Wood ended, 1918; Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in the United States by William Wilson, a broker, and Dr Robert Smith, a physician, 1895; Italy declared war on Britain and France, 1940; Italy became a republic, 1946; an earthquake in Northern Afghanistan (lasting eight days) caused over 2,000 deaths, 1956; Crown Princess Margrethe of Denmark married Count Henri de Monpezat, 1967. Today is

the Feast Day of St Bardo, St Bogumilus or Theophilus, St Gellulius and his Companions, St Ithamar and St Landericus or Landry of Paris.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Christopher Mowbray, "Masters of Light (I): the Satyr in the Campagna. Dutch Italianate Landscape Painting", 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Gracia Lafuente, "Medieval Art and William Morris", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: Michael Rickerts, "Warhol and Emotion: trauma", 1pm. British Museum: Carolyn Perry, "Living in Egypt: pharaonic, Mamluk and modern household objects", 11.30am. Wallace Collection, London W1: Rosalind Savill, "Severus Porcelain in the Wallace Collection", 1pm.

DINNERS

Scientific Instrument Makers' Company: Sir Ivor Cohen, Master of the Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers, and Lady Cohen, were the hosts at the Company's Annual Banquet held yesterday evening at Mansion House, London EC4. Mr David Howard, Alderman and Sheriff, and his Lady, were the guests of honour. Sir Peter Parker, Sir Ivor Cohen and the Senior Warden, Mr Brian Atherton, were the speakers. Air Vice-Marshal J.H. Thompson, Commandant of the RAF College, Cranwell, and Commander L. Hugo RN, Captain of HMS Vigilant, also attended.

PAINTER-STAINERS' COMPANY

Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, opened the Craft Exhibition of the Worshipful Company of Painter-Stainers held yesterday at Painters' Hall, London EC4.

ASSISTANT RECORDERS

The following have been appointed Assistant Recorders on the Western Circuit: Peter Anthony Stanfield Barrie, Peter Michael Blair, Richard Bruce Davies Broadford, Benjamin James Brown QC, Roger Stephen Clinch, John Watts Dixon, Martha James Simpson Edmunds, Jonathan Nicholas O'Grady Galsworthy QC, Susan Elizabeth Jackson, Timothy Robert Lamb QC, Karol Paul Edward Lusk QC, Stephen Charles Leonard, Nigel James Dominic Lickley, Nicholas Richard Marston, Richard Martin Mawhinney, Jane Elizabeth Mackay Miller, Louise Morgan, Timothy John Mousley, Alanast Robert Norris QC, Stewart Patterson, Martin Peter Phipps, Philip Alexander Shepherd, Jonathan Peter Swift, Robb Stewart Talbot, Philip Hugh Wessell, Peter Malcolm Wright.

CHURCH APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments have been announced by the Church of England: The Rev Christopher Brown, Rector, Twyford St James and Rural Dean of Twyford (Sussex); to be the new Non-resident Canon of Salisbury Cathedral (same diocese). The Rev George Crossley, Assistant Curate, Bideford St Mary (Devon); to be Vicar: Ranscombe with Titchfield (Dorset). The Rev Derek French, Assistant Curate, St Paul's (Manchester); to be Team Vicar: East Farworth and Earsley (same diocese). The Rev Anna Humphreys, NSM Assistant Curate, Manchester: Good Shepherd, St Barnabas and Church of the Resurrection (Manchester); to be NSM Assistant Curate, Burnage St Nicholas (same diocese). The Rev Jonathan Mayrick, Team Rector, Tabary and Rural Dean of Chalk (Surrey); to be Residentiary Canon of Rochester Cathedral (Diocese of Rochester). The Rev John Peadar, Vicar, Redburn (St Albans); to be Vicar: Bedford St Paul (same diocese). The Rev Robin Pettit, Priest-in-Charge, Charwick Richard, and Parish Development Officer (Blackburn); to be also Secretary to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (same diocese). The Rev Gordon Whitty, Priest-in-Charge, Mer Foly Trinity (Lisfield); to be Priest-in-Charge, Ramsey with Newborough and Rungway (same diocese).

RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENTS

The Rev John Catley, Vicar, St Anne-on-the-Sea St Margaret, and Rural Dean of Kirkham (Blackburn); to retire 31 July. The Rev Ray Phillips, Chaplain, Winchester St Cross Hospital with St Faith (Winchester); to retire 31 May. OTHER APPOINTMENTS: Dr Rosamund Redden, Kent and Sussex Diocesan Trust (Dorchester); to be Diocesan Older Persons' Officer (same diocese). Diana White, to be Lay Canon of Salisbury Cathedral (Salisbury).

Excise duty chargeable in the United Kingdom

WEDNESDAY LAW REPORT

10 JUNE 1998

Regina v Hayward
Court of Appeal
(Criminal Division)
(Lord Justice Judge,
Mr Justice Curtis and
the Recorder of
Nottingham 8
June 1998)

WHERE ARRANGEMENTS for the suspension of excise duty on goods held in bond in the United Kingdom were broken by the use of fraudulent documentation, duty immediately became chargeable in the United Kingdom.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appellant's appeal against conviction of four counts of being knowingly concerned in the fraudulent evasion of excise duty contrary to section 170(2) of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1987. He had also been convicted of one offence of causing a false declaration to be made, contrary to section 167 of the Act.

The appellant had a legitimate business trading as "Beer Lovers" in Calais. The essential case against him was that, in the course of his business, he had arranged for spirits on which excise duty had been suspended in bonded warehouses in the United Kingdom to be placed on the market without duty ever having been paid. Paul Lesak QC and Stephen Solley QC (Peter Rickson & Partners, Manchester) for the appellant; Anton Lodge (Solicitor to HM Customs and Excise) for the Crown.

Lord Justice Judge said that, at the trial, the appellant had admitted that he had arranged for false documents to be returned to the bonded warehouses in the United Kingdom which had released the spirits.

The single area of dispute about the facts was that the appellant maintained that all the spirits dealt with by him on that basis had been sold in France through his company,

accepted that some of the goods had indeed gone to Calais, but asserted that the bulk of them had never left the United Kingdom at all and had been disposed of here without payment of the appropriate excise duty. The essential feature of the appeal was that the judge had been wrong to rule and subsequently to direct the jury that it made no difference to the issue of guilt whether the appellant had sold the spirits free of duty in England or in France.

It had been submitted on behalf of the appellant that if the spirits from bond in England had reached France, whether as a result of dishonesty or not, the appellant might have evaded payment of excise duty in France, but that was a matter for French domestic law. The 1979 Act was concerned only with evasion of duty payable in the United Kingdom, and no such liability had arisen.

Regulation 1 of the Excise Goods (Holding, Movement, Warehousing and REDS) Regulations 1992, which imple-

mented Directive 92/12 EEC, provided that excise duty was payable on the goods which were the subject of the counts against the appellant. Those goods could, however, be held or moved without payment of duty under suspension arrangements, and where those arrangements applied, the time when excise duty was chargeable was postponed.

Regulation 9 permitted the movement out of bond of goods under the umbrella of continuing suspension arrangements for export purposes, subject to the conditions in regulation 10. The goods had to be accompanied by "an appropriate document issued by the consignor".

In the present case, the "appropriate" accompanying documents did not comply with the conditions governing movement of goods under suspension arrangements. The goods had never been sent to the named consignees, nor had they arrived at the specified addresses, and stamps purporting to have been made by the relevant fiscal authorities were counterfeit. The suspension arrangement had therefore lapsed, and excise duty had immediately become chargeable.

The detailed analysis of the relevant articles of Directive 92/12 EEC by counsel for the appellant had not led the court to conclude that the domestic legal principles that suspension arrangements were vitiated by fraud in circumstances such as those in the present case were or might be inconsistent with Community provisions, and the judge's direction to the jury was therefore correct.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

WORDS

WILLIAM HARTSTON
Soccer (colloq.)

as: "By truncated assoc. + Oxford -er".
The habit of familiarising words by truncation, mutation and the addition of -er began, according to Par-

tridge, at Rugby School and reached Oxford late in 1875. So Addison's Walk was "Adders" and Jesus College became "Jagers".

An OED citation, however, shows footer is older than soccer: "A peculiar fashion of their own [at Harrow] which prompts them to call football 'foot-er'" (*Boy's Own*, 1863).

We ask the questions

(such as: You no longer take drugs or drink to excess. So, Boy George, name your vice)

How did you feel about playing the Albert Hall last night?
It wasn't my first time, but it can be a stuffy venue. That's why I always kick off with an array of in ya face hits. It always gets people in the mood. I try to do one London show every year, whether I have product out or not. Having been on a nightmare schedule with Culture Club of album, tour, album, tour, I now refuse to work like a well-oiled machine.

How do you feel when you hear "Karma Chameleon"?
I used to despise it but I now view it with great affection. It's not easy to write something that stays at No 1 for seven weeks. In many ways it was the nail in Culture Club's coffin, but it paid for my beautiful house. I call it "Karma comedian".

What is your opinion of George Michael now that he is "out"?
I think he will become a better artist and a happier person, once he gets over the embarrassment. Life in the closet is grim and those of us in the creative industries have an obligation to be honest and forward thinking. Sadly, the incident in the public loo gives bigots the opportunity to point the finger and say that all gays are depraved and sex mad. Some of us are deeply romantic.

You once said you would never sleep with a woman, but you want a baby when the time is right. Is that time getting closer?
I have considered children but I think adoption would be the best option because I could never commit to a hetero, or hi, relationship. It wouldn't be fair. I have incredible intimacy with women but I prefer men sexually. I accept that heterosexuality is part of me, just as everyone has a bit of queer in them, but it's a line I choose not to cross.

You no longer take drugs or drink to excess. So name your vice.
I still smoke but I have just given up alcohol. It's been three weeks

and as I DJ almost every night, it's a triumph. People love to force booze on you; I guess tragedy always loves a hostage.

I don't have too many vices these days as I'm very careful about what I eat. My vice must be men. I could never give them up and I love to flirt. But my worst vice is arguing. I've always had an authority complex.

Who do you think is more benign: Jesus, Krishna or Buddha?
I guess they are all equal. I think one can learn so much by exploring all faiths but religion is like wearing black tie. One has to use a bit of interpretation and be selective. Great truths are universal and often too simple to grasp. Take what you need and question everything. Change is the only constant and religion does not always accommodate change.

When did you last cry, and what about?
The last time I really cried was when my brother was arrested for manslaughter, but, to be honest, I cry very easily. Tragedies on the news, hunger, ethnic cleansing, rape, AIDS, there is so much to cry about.

If you were going to be cast on to a desert island and you could take your make-up bag, your CD player or your boyfriend, which would you choose?
If I had a lover then of course I'd choose him over anything domestic. I could never live without human contact. A make-up bag or a CD player would never do. A desert island on my own would be like prison, however beautiful it was.

Do you still have tea with Marilyn?
We never drank tea in the old days but Marilyn will always be part of my life because we are sisters under the skin. He has a very self-destructive nature, but I know how wounded he is and that makes me love him. All deserted children have an unbearable cross to bear,

and there are so many of us out there.

What would you have built to celebrate the millennium?
I think the Dome is a disgusting waste of money. The cash should be spent on homes for the homeless. How can we have national pride when there are thousands of kids sleeping rough in the shadow of Buckingham palace?

Do you regret what you wrote about having an affair with Kirk Brandon in your autobiography, "Take It Like A Man"?
I regret that Kirk had to make a fool of himself and there was no real joy in winning. He was after my money and he got what he deserved. If he had asked for financial help, I would have obliged, but he tried to crucify me publicly and brand me a liar and it cost me £50,000. What's more, if I had written about sleeping with a woman, I would have been slapped on the back, not taken to court.

Who or what do you despise most?
I don't really despise anyone. Homophobes and racists bother me but I realise that these things are a form of self-hatred. When you hate yourself or have no control over your emotions you have to find something or someone worse than yourself.

Who or what do you love most?
I love my family and my sister, Siobhan, especially, because we are very close. I love Amanda, my best mate, Dragana and Simon, Michael and Philip Salon, whom I've known for ever. There is an endless list of people I love and value dearly. I'm very lucky to have so many good friends.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
I'd have a square chin and longer legs, but to be honest I'm quite happy with who I am.

I wish I had more self-control where eating is concerned, and more patience.



Next week: You ask the questions

Ann Widdecombe

Please send any questions you would like to put to Anne Widdecombe, shadow health minister, by post to Your Questions, Features, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL or fax on 0171-293 2182, or e-mail to c.longrigg@independent.co.uk by lunchtime on Friday 12 June. The best questions will be published



Where there's muck there's brass – and it could be yours

Plans to reward us for producing less rubbish could end up in the bin. By Nicole Veash

"You know that space just between the top of the kitchen cupboard and the ceiling?" says Emma Flynn. "Well, at one stage we had 400 bottles crammed up there."

Like millions of others, Emma, 27, and her four housemates intended to be conscientious recyclers. But things got in the way. Work commitments, lack of transport, someone else's responsibility, that kind of thing. And what began as a plan to recycle became a distinct reluctance to throw anything away.

Many households are familiar with the symptoms of good intentions. First the empty wine bottles mount up on top of the cupboards and flow on to the floor. Then the orderly pile of newspapers becomes so huge that it becomes almost impossible to open the door. And finally, someone in the household gets fed up and puts the whole lot out for the dustmen in black bin bags.

As Environment Minister Michael Meacher knows, domestic waste is a problem. On average, each household produces a tonne of rubbish each year. And each year, the options on how to dispose of it are narrowed down.

When the long awaited Government paper on a National Waste Strategy was unveiled yesterday, Michael Meacher flatly denied suggestions that households would be taxed in relation to the amount of rubbish they produced. His own spin

on the proposals is that an incentive would be provided for those households producing less rubbish. In other words, if there are fewer black sacks outside your door you will benefit financially.

Emma Flynn has shared with students, and most recently with four young professionals. "We would put out stacks of rubbish each week," says Emma. "At least six black bin bags. More often than not, we were cooking individually so you would have rubbish from around eight meals going in the bin each day. I reckon we went through a four litre milk container a day, which takes up a huge amount of room in the bin."

"We always felt we should recycle, but it was never done. Because there wasn't an actual doorstep collection we had to hump the things down to a local supermarket, which was difficult without a car."

"Some kind of incentive might encourage people to take individual responsibility for their own waste."

Many European countries, and some states in the US, require residents to separate their rubbish at source. In Germany, kitchens come complete with at least two bins, one for food scraps and the other for products such as glass, paper, plastic and tins, all of which are recycled. If householders throw away waste



Suzanne Barry says lack of door-to-door collections make recycling hard

Nicola Kurtz

which can be recycled they are liable to be fined. Britain lags far behind much of Europe on recycling issues. We haven't yet assimilated environmentally friendly waste disposal methods into our culture.

"Recycling is low down on our priorities," says Steve Emmison, editor of *Material Recycling Weekly*. "We have a disposable culture and we

need a positive approach to change this. Financial incentives could encourage people to change their habits, but the Government must introduce pilot schemes to determine whether this is actually an effective move in the right direction."

Suzanne Barry, a 43-year-old mother of two, used to live in Aberdeen, whose council which was so

in tune with recycling needs that householders had two collections a week: one for general rubbish, one for recyclable rubbish.

"When I moved to London I was shocked at how few recycling facilities were available," she says. "I would call myself semi-green. I used to buy recycled products and save all my bottles, tins and newspapers,

but because no-one comes to the door things are much more difficult."

Each week, Barry puts out ten black sacks of rubbish for the dustmen. It's mostly nappies, she says, but of course they are neither biodegradable or eco-friendly. She is wary of the proposal to tax families which produce more rubbish. "I think families should be allowed to have a certain amount of rubbish each week," she says. "Obviously a couple without children will always have less waste than us."

Michael Jacobs, general secretary of the Fabian Society and author of *The Green Economy*, says that although the Government's first pronouncements on the recycling debate are positive, major strides forward still need to be taken.

"Our foremost need," he says, "is to have the right infrastructure in place to accompany the Government's suggestions. Most people think that when they take their waste to recycling bins it is automatically recycled. But very often this isn't the case."

"We've seen huge amounts of waste paper build up because we don't have the recycling plants to cope with it. Manufacturers and packagers need to start producing a wider variety of recycled products. Only when they do that will we

have the fully integrated recycling system that we need."

Jane Stephenson, chair of Waste Watch, runs a community recycling consortium in the west country.

"Bristol is one of the few parts of the country that provide free kerbside collections," she explains. "Without this type of service across the country, the Government's proposals have little chance of working."

Having been involved in kerbside collections since the early 1980s, Stephenson says that recycling isn't an exclusively middle class thing, as some commentators believe.

"It's all about education," she says. "People need to know more about the effects of rubbish on the environment. And if someone actually comes to their door to collect their waste, then recycling affects them directly. They don't even need a car to go to the bottle bank."

Stephenson's acknowledgement that many local authorities are playing a far from proactive part in encouraging their residents to recycle is something, but the important thing, according to Suzanne Barry, is planning and follow-up. "The Government must set reasonable limits, taking into account things like nappies and kitchen towel. And they need to back it up with services, like door to door collections. If they don't, then people might just dump their rubbish on waste ground. And where would that get us?"

How Everest looks from here

The world's highest peak was almost in his grasp. Back home in Kent, Stephen Goodwin reflects on the experience of a lifetime

Strong and dance can be great unifiers, particularly when accompanied by strong drink. In a chhang house in Pheriche, a low stone hamlet about four hours' walk down from Everest Base Camp, weeks of tension on the mountain were soothed away in late-night revelry.

My personal high on the 10-week expedition had been the South Summit, less than 100m below Everest's main top (8,848m). The highest point in the world had seemed within our grasp but inexplicably a US team preparing the route ahead ran out of climbing rope. The dance rhythm was laid down by hand, mainly those of cookboy Pema Tsering, the dreadlocked Nepali Sherpa, and two of the climbing Sherpas, both called Nema. The same crew also led the singing, though later three Sherpas joined in, in what seemed to be a provocative dialogue in song.

The chhang, local beer of fermented millet, was one of the clearest and strongest I had tasted. By the time I tottered off under a starry sky to find my billet I felt a warm affection for my fellow Everest expedition members. It had not always been so. Not that our Himalayan Kingdoms Expeditions team had been the most openly fractious body at Base Camp. Quite regularly the colourful invective of frayed tempers, usually American, would carry across the glacial moonscape.

The internal chemistry of an expedition can be crucial to its success or failure. Obviously you need to have trust in companions on whom your own life depends. Be it at the other end of the rope, sharing the tedious effort of boiling snow for vital drinks, adjusting the flow on an oxygen bottle or taking decisions on the weather. Are you hooked up with players or passengers? But on a big Everest trip it is much more complex than that, with the management of strong-willed Sherpas, and relations with other teams over fixing ropes or sharing supplies.

Our own expedition had one further major imponderable. It was a commercial venture with clients paying around £25,000 each for a place - and an equal right to go for the top. Hardly anyone knew anyone else before we arrived in Kathmandu (or Heathrow) and only gradually did we get an idea of each other's mountaineering ability, or lack of it. In altitude terms, my own record was the weakest. I had only

been to the top of Mont Blanc, at 4,807m a good deal less than the elevation of Base Camp. The others had all been to at least 7,000m - yet some struggled to absorb it.

So how did our group divide up? There were the players, actively working on behalf of the team and involved in the day-to-day organisation. Foremost was Sundee Dhillon, 28, doctoring to both our medical needs and tending the computers and satellite phone, and Rob Owen, 39, stockbroker-comedian, tirelessly cranking the fickle electricity generator, and one of the keenest to get up to Advanced Base Camp in the Western Cwm to repair the devastation caused by 100 mph winds. To the pleasure of all, Sundee reached the summit on 25 May. Rob decided the South Col was high enough, showing a wise sense of his limits not matched by others.

Byron Smith, 37, Canadian car dealer, was in a class of his own, exasperating in his egocentricity and yet likeable. A self-made millionaire, he professed himself not a team player and declared no one would stop him getting to the top. For all his drive and physical power, in the end, like me, he was stopped by whoever it was in one US team failed to ensure there was enough rope to complete the route between the South Summit and the main top. The row over that omission goes on.

New York physicist David Callaway, 41, and Irish nurse Josie Kieran, 44, are able to go to places such as Everest because there are such things as commercial expeditions. To be hired, neither rank among nature's climbers and if selection depended on demonstrated ability in climbing ice and steep ground they would not qualify. They were "passengers". Quite why David was there remains a mystery. A lot of the time he was absorbed in a weighty professional text book. Occasionally he would growl something enigmatic like "the good die young" and in a rare burst of conversation confessed that his evenings were usually spent with five-hour stretches of television. Single, it was his third (I think) visit to Everest but he had never been above Camp 3 (7,200m) on the Lhotse Face. He appeared to panic on a short steep pitch in the Ice Fall and the last time I saw him he was in a similar state on a slippery bit on the Lhotse Face. Retreat followed, all the way to the Big Apple.

Josie would have been the first

Irish woman to the top of the world and as such became quite a celebrity. Her most tense moments at Base Camp were telephone interviews for the Gay Byrne chat show. The Irish people are soft enough to come up with the cash for Josie to try again, but I hope they will think hard about the possible consequences. On her unsuccessful summit bid, she had to be "short-rope" by guide Dave Walsh up the 500m slope above the South Col. It's steepish and in previous years sections have been secured with fixed lines, but it is still fairly easy ground for any competent climber. No leash should be required.

Then there was Lily Leonard, 42, a wealthy American, resident in Hong Kong, and her guide Jim Williams, 43, from Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The pair have climbed regularly together on big mountains all over the world, but even so their plan to bag not only Everest but its neighbours Lhotse and Nuptse seemed a mite ambitious. None was achieved. Lily pretty well collapsed at the South Summit and turned back with Josie and Jim. When I saw her two days later arriving at Base Camp she could barely speak and was painfully thin. She had had a virus earlier and was probably never fully fit.

Such was the state of Lily and Josie, that the whole party - re-joined by summiters Dhillon, Walsh and three Sherpas - did not get back to their tents at the South Col until around 6pm - some 21 hours after leaving them and many hours after everyone else. A snow flurry had delayed them for a while and it is chilling to think what might have ensued if it had turned into a prolonged storm.

I haven't the experience to pass much comment on our guides. I liked and respected them both, though they are very different - Dave Walsh, 54, our leader, was quiet and laid-back, while Jim was loquacious. Perhaps we missed the third guide, "Barney" Barnicot, 45, a past Everest summiter, who fell ill on the walk-in and had to drop out soon after arriving in Base Camp. Another

hand on the Sherpas and logistics might have been useful. Given such a disparate bunch of characters and abilities, it may actually be a surprise that we only had one shouting match. But it was of some passion and for Byron and I was perhaps influential in denying us a second shot at the summit. With the party split between Base Camp and Advanced Base in the Western Cwm, those of us at the higher camp had gone for the summit on 19 May, hoping to catch what appeared from the forecast to be a brief weather window ahead of a cyclone. The forecast proved alarmist: the rope debacle cost us the summit and then we were heaped with black looks and abuse by our team mates on descending. Jim accused Byron

and I of splitting the team by dashing for the summit. Really his remarks were directed at Dave, we were just proxies. But the words hit home, particularly Jim's message "you've had your chance and failed". Later he apologised and we shook hands. The Pheriche chhang session was the final soothing balm, and friendship was restored. Byron and I descended the Ice Fall early next morning. I had two lengthy articles to write and photographs to transmit. It was some 48 hours before it dawned that members of other teams were getting a second shot.

But no invite came to rejoin the team higher up and I did not push it. Perhaps I will always regret it. Having stood on the South Summit, less than 100m below the main top, I am confident 8,848m was within my grasp. But in the relief of descending to Base Camp I had already told Lucie, my wife, I would not go up again. And having already lost well over a stone and with leg muscles reduced to pipe cleaners, was I as physically up to it as I believed?

Back home in Kent, looking over my computer to a garden lush with early summer foliage and climbing roses, the land of ice and rock and the dusty middens of Pheriche seem a world away. Yet questions of what might have been seem destined to linger in my mind for quite a while.

Sherpas prepare a place for prayer at Base Camp (above); below, Stephen Goodwin with crucial equipment



IRRITATIONS OF MODERN LIFE

1. ONE-MAN BUSES
BY HATTIE HAYRIDGE, ACTRESS

THE 'PAY-as-you-Enter' double-decker bus travels under many aliases. Because it needs to. It is that unpopular. Also known as the 'One-Man Bus', because it goes at the speed of one man pushing it. It is the motorised equivalent of the lower block. And like the tower block, the people responsible for it are never to be found inside. Let's start with the design, if you can call it that, of this characterless, ugly box. On the outside some of them are now completely covered in advertising. If the bus didn't move off (eventually), you'd think it was a hoarding. The dreary interior looks as if workmen opened the



doors, threw in the seats and poles, then bolted them down where they landed. Every possible travelling position is catered for. You can sit facing forwards, backwards, or sideways, a foot higher than everyone else, looking at the window clips, or with your face inches away from the metal stair-covering.

The stairs are tiny, the bell is tiny, the whole feel of these busses is like the cheap metal of foreign coins with an exchange rate of 17,000 to the pound sterling. No one could find a journey on one of them anything but a chore.

They cause road rage, passenger rage, driver rage, and bus queue rage when the bus you want goes sailing past those already standing at the stop. It has single-handedly been the cause of all the traffic jams known to man. These things park so long at each stop that workmen had the time to install the bus lane around them.

Once on, you can't get off. Held up in traffic, you're a prisoner only a yard before the bus stop because it's more than the driver's job's worth to let you off.

Its alias, the 'driver-only' bus, only proves the designers forgot the existence of the passengers. In their rosy world, there are no disabled people, no old people, no mothers with push chairs, no people with shopping, suitcases or crutches and I'm sure the trials were a great success.

The answer is not to bring back the conductor. There's nowhere for them to stand. But bring back the old Routemasters, the hop-on hop-off buses, the ones that actually moved, the ones you could travel on for pleasure. The ones designed for passengers - I refuse to be called a customer - but that's another irritation...

The glamorous way to run up an overdraft

If you have the means, check into a hotel and stay there. By Anita Chaudhuri

LET'S FACE IT, there can be few more glamorous ways to run up an overdraft than to take up an extended residency in a top hotel. Just imagine. No more stumbling around racking up Sainsbury's Reward Points in the seven o'clock crush. No more midnight panic when the tequila bottle mysteriously runs dry. No more rubber gloves. All your prayers answered with a fully stocked mini-bar and an intravenous link to room service.

If you have the means, then rest assured that you will be in good company. Saying that you live in a hotel has always had enormous cachet. Famous long-stay hotel residents have included Coco Chanel, Dorothy Parker, Liz Taylor, Dylan Thomas and Howard Hughes. Chanel took a suite at the Paris Ritz in the Thirties and ordered a bellboy to deliver

fresh carnations to her room every day. One man who perhaps understands the allure of hotels more than most is businessman Alan Edgington. In May 1995 he landed a new job at Otters, a Ford dealership in Crawley. He checked into the Europa hotel at nearby Gatwick Airport for a few days - and checked out three years, one month and eight days later. His final bill was £40,000, for which he could probably have secured a modest residence of his own somewhere. But that, of course, would be missing the point.

By all accounts, the Europa is a serviceable, four-star establishment, not known for its tales of debauchery and rock 'n' roll excess. Charming up to a point but not, perhaps,

up to the standards of the Paris Ritz. "Primarily we are a hotel that is very much oriented towards the conference traveller," explains Heinz Sedlacek, general manager of the Europa. "We get a lot of people passing through to and from Gatwick Airport."

It sounds spookily like the Traveller's Tavern, the fictional Norwich hotel where cult TV character Alan Partridge idles away his days. In one memorable episode, Partridge is so bored in his room that he attempts to disassemble the Corby trouser press in his room and shows off his impressive collection of free hotel mini-shampoos and shower caps, of which he has accumulated hundreds.

"I cannot confirm whether Mr Edgington collected all his free shampoos over the years but he would be entitled to them - that is all factored into our nightly room rate," explains the Europa manager helpfully. Right.

And does the Europa have many guests who simply can't bear to check out for several years? "I have to admit no, this is a rare instance," says Sedlacek. "I have been managing hotels all over the world, in the Middle East and Africa. Abroad people are much more likely to live in hotels than in the UK, it doesn't go on here so much."

So why does he think anyone would want to stay at his hotel for three years? "Well, I think Mr Edgington was a bachelor and the hotel suited him. He didn't have to worry about running a home."

Alan Edgington is certainly in good company. Elizabeth Taylor stayed at the old Ambassador Hotel in Hollywood, sipping tea on the balcony and smelling the freshly cut grass on the rolling lawn below.

Hotels offer luxury, but they also accord untold opportunities for brat-like behaviour. Dorothy Parker moved into New York's Algonquin hotel after the collapse of her marriage and stayed there for several years, hosting secret cocktail parties in her room all through Prohibition.

F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald lived at the Ambassador and one night piled clothes and furniture onto

the bed, set it ablaze and skipped town without paying their bill. Dylan Thomas saw out his last days in the Fifties at the Chelsea Hotel, a venue that also played host to Nico, the Velvet Underground, Andy Warhol and Sid and Nancy.

Howard Hughes lived at the Chateau Marmont in Los Angeles in the Fifties and, in an increasingly paranoid and racist frame of mind, walked up the back stairs five flights to his room every time the black elevator operator was on duty.

The Marmont, where Jim Belushi died and Robert De Niro holed up in a penthouse for two years, has always been a popular rooming house. "This is not a hotel for tourists," quipped manager Philip Truelove to

Los Angeles Magazine recently. More recent hotel devotees have included Shirley Manson of Garbage who holed up in a hotel in Wisconsin when not at home in Edinburgh, Van Morrison who spends months living at the Portobello Hotel and Ralph Fiennes, who moved into the Pelham Hotel in South Kensington after his marriage broke up, and is still a regular guest.

In the end, the only thing that persuaded Mr Edgington has moved out is to pursue business interests with another garage in Plymouth.

Mr Edgington himself was unavailable for comment yesterday, but his girlfriend Jo Upton, who works for the same Ford dealership, was indignant that anyone should associate him with king of the "sports casual" style, Alan Partridge. "He's nothing like that, honestly."

You can't always get what you want ... even though the taxman does

They got no satisfaction out of their recent fiscal negotiations, but then the Rolling Stones have always been careful not to give too much to the Inland Revenue. By Pierre Perrone

ROD STEWART, cracking corny jokes with Ron Wood about jeopardising his tax exile status by attending the recording of a TV special broadcast 10 days ago, may have been remembering his 1974 outburst in *Melody Maker*:

"The Government thinks it'll tax us bastards right up to the hilt because we won't leave, but that's wrong because I will if I want to ... with a 90 per cent tax ceiling, it's just not worth living in England anymore," the tousled-haired singer quipped before setting abroad.

Last month, Rod The Mod didn't know how close he was to a major news story. Within a week of *An Audience With Rod*, there were orchestrated rumblings about the Rolling Stones trying to cut a deal with the Inland Revenue over their Foreign Earnings Deduction. On Monday came the announcement: the band had failed to reach an agreement with the British Government. They had decided to stay away from these shores for the time being. The UK dates were rescheduled for a different tax year, next summer.

Michael Ackerman, American music business attorney-at-large, has read *Entertainment Industry Economics* by Harold Vogel. "It's very dry, like a surgical manual. Required bedside reading," he says. "Joking aside, if somebody knows about tax situations, it's the Rolling Stones. They're very business-savvy. Promoter Michael Cohl pays them a fee for the tour, say 100, 120 million dollars for however many dates he can cram in. There are physical limitations, practical considerations. The Stones are also extremely careful with respect to the number of days they spend in the States. They always really count those days. That's why they rehearse in Canada, that's why they play there at the beginning and the end of their North American tours. Also there's sponsorship involved and the Stones make a significant amount. I'd guess a million dollars, on merchandising per date."

Ackerman broadens the argument to his own experience. "Actually, the same kind of taxation happens in some states in America. You have to pay tax on your earnings within that state's borders. I don't see anyone not playing Pennsylvania as a result."

Bernard Docherty, tour publicist and spokesman for the Rolling Stones, concurs. He's seen this kind of controversy before. "A few years ago, the German government started to retain money at source until you showed your expenses, be they taxi receipts or spending on costumes. Some of my clients like Joe Cocker and Tina Turner kicked up a fuss, U2 complained as well and the authorities relented. Anyway, the Stones hate the term 'tax exile'. It sounds like someone sitting by a pool sipping a pina colada. We're talking about a hard-working band."

Are the Stones betraying their British fans? Are they really looking after number one? Are they truly concerned about the financial well-being of their employees or too mean to pay the taxman? Band manager Francis Stasium has experienced first-hand the way Jagger treats employees and colleagues. "In 1987, he sought the services of my



Early dealings with managers who took a large cut of the Stones' profits taught Mick and the lads to become more financially astute

Kent Gavin

then partner and client, Ed Stasium, for the solo record that became *Primitive Cool*. That was done in Barbados," she remembers.

"At that time, we probably would have travelled in cargo and slept in a tent to get a chance to work with him, Jeff Beck and some of the other musicians involved. Nonetheless, every courtesy was extended to us through negotiations with Roger Davies (who manages Tina Turner and Joe Cocker amongst others), who was acting as consultant on the project. We got first-class travel, a generous per-diem, private accommodation with maid service and home-cooked meals served three times a day. It seems Mick really values the services being rendered. This is just a thought but maybe those who complain about Jagger's meanness are just resentful of the fact that he is more astute in business than they are."

Mick has had to be, since early dealings with former managers Eric Easton, Andrew Loog Oldham and

Allen Klein left the Stones well out of pocket. The singer once chased Klein around the Savoy hotel while screaming "Where's my money?" and later testified in a lawsuit against him.

For attorney Michael Ackerman, "it's really a case of once bitten, twice shy. The Stones stuck their fingers in the music business pan and got burnt early on. Allen Klein gets a bad rap because he's retained the rights to their Decca Sixties back-catalogue, which still sells in significant numbers, but he also did a lot of good for them, he revolutionized the music business for better or worse."

"He was an actual accountant who could audit the record companies' books. But, as Bill Wyman says, he was more out for himself than he was for them. Keith Richards just chalks it up to music lessons. We learned from the best, he will tell you."

Jagger copped a few moves from his nemesis, too, and now goes through contracts with a fine-tooth

comb. Prince Rupert Lowenstein is on hand to offer advice to the Stones frontman, who is probably still trying to make up for lost earnings, playing catch-up with his contemporaries, eyeing a flotation on the stock market à la David Bowie.

We've been here before. In the early 1970s, when Labour got in, pop stars voted with their feet, departing Blighty the moment they hit a certain tax-bracket. The Stones picked France and soon Ringo Starr, Marc Bolan, Cat Stevens, Elton John, Rod Stewart, David Bowie, Bryan Ferry, Yes, Queen and Jethro Tull followed them into tax exile. They jetted between Monte Carlo, Switzerland and the United States and gave interviews in which they pined for Marmite, cricket and warm beer. They set up companies registered in the Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Gibraltar, the Isle Of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Lichtenstein or Luxembourg.

Around the same time, major stars like Paul McCartney, George

Harrison, Cliff Richard, Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey bit the bullet and backed Britain by staying here. However, they hired financial consultants and accountants to maximise their tax deductions. As Daltrey himself declared upon receiving a cheque for £1m, "You only have tax problems when you make a profit. Who says The Who are making a profit? What do you think it costs to run our sort of business?"

Even after Margaret Thatcher got in and brought the top tax bracket from 90 per cent down to a more manageable 40 per cent, Sting, Boy George, Def Leppard, Paul Young, The Cure and even Ian McNabb of The Icicle Works remember: they had a major hit in America in the mid-Eighties with "From A Whisper To A Scream" sought a haven in France, America, the Republic of Ireland (where a law giving tax exemption to creative artists has also been a boon to the film industry) or somewhere more exotic.

This explains the popularity of

recording studios in the Bahamas, Barbados, and Montserrat at that time. It's not just the vibes or the weather, man; after a gruelling world tour, you're outside the reach of the British tax regime for the rest of that financial year.

Boredom can set in, however. Marc Bolan famously remarked that he was bored out of his skull in Monte Carlo. "All I did was drink and take drugs." The late Who drummer Keith Moon got incredibly out of shape when he moved to California in the mid-Seventies. His self-imposed exile undoubtedly contributed to his early death.

Still, the Rolling Stones shouldn't worry unduly. With a new Motorola TV commercial using "You Can't Always Get What You Want" and "classic" live albums re-released on Virgin, the royalties are still rolling in (and nobody's property trawled through the Stones archives yet, though the BBC's 1960s recordings are rumoured to be surfacing soon). Business as usual.

UNHAPPY RETURNS

LIKE MOST Swedish artists, Abba have had their tax problems. In the Eighties, the band had to turn against their manager, the late Stig Anderson, when the web of companies he had created (trading in everything from oil to potatoes - accepted in lieu of payment for records sold, behind the Iron Curtain) was investigated by the Swedish tax authorities.



IN MARCH 1975, the US Treasury Department claimed that James Brown, who fines his backing musicians at the drop of a hat, owed \$4.5m in unpaid taxes. The Godfather of Soul eventually sold some of his radio stations to pay off part of the debt.



In 1979, Pink Floyd lost most of their earnings (including royalties from *The Dark Side of the Moon*) in the collapse of investment company Norton Warburg, which was handling its business affairs. In the debacle, the musicians found themselves liable for huge back-taxes. The group made the best of their personal differences and struggled on with *The Wall* tour.



IN 1970, after signing a series of dodgy deals, The Kinks found themselves almost penniless and facing huge tax demands. Songwriter Ray Davies, who'd already written the immortal "The Taxman's taken all my dough" line in 1966's "Sunny Afternoon", now penned a whole concept album about the labyrinthine nature of the business: *Lola Vs Powerman and the Moneygoround*.

The night the score stood still

CLASSICAL
THE RITE OF SPRING
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
LONDON

THE LAST three bars of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* go something like this. The "Sacrificial Dance" effectively vaporises in a wispy trail of flute sound; there's a split second's silence; a shriek of piccolo; and one final convulsion. Finish. No two performances of it ever sound quite the same. For instance, to what extent is that piccolo shriek a grace-note to the headlong crash of the final chord? How much to separate them? And how long that preceding silence? A beat-and-a-half in whatever the chosen tempo, says the score. No comma, no pause, just a momentary suspension of disbelief. Momentary? In his intriguing performance with the Philharmonia Orchestra on Sunday, Valery Gergiev must have held that silence for a full five seconds. Meaning that he literally stopped the clock, froze the frame, re-constituted the score. And yet the preceding



Gergiev's gift is making an audience re-evaluate familiar music

Laurie Lewis

music somehow filled the silence, making it audible, logical, justifiable. Just justifiable, a millisecond-from-grotesque-justifiable. Stravinsky might even have forgiven him.

He's an extraordinarily potent force, is Gergiev. I don't

know of any other conductor working today whose instinctive oneness with the music he conducts can turn even aberrations like this one into believable insights. Such is his conviction, his complete subservience to the spirit that moves the notes,

that his way will always feel like the way. Even as the shoots and tendrils of creation sprouted through the time-lapse imagery of Stravinsky's fertile introduction, it was plain that bodily rhythm was to be the prevailing feature of his read-

ing. Impulse and uplift over knock 'em dead brutality. The rush and intoxication of the first spring, the original dance to the music of time. The Philharmonia gave of their keenest and most buoyant rhythms (cracking timpani playing), the sonorities still sprung surprises.

Gergiev's ability to draw an audience back into even the most familiar music and insist they re-evaluate is one of his greatest gifts. In the first half of this programme, Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* were exceedingly well hung. One's mind went back to the numerous occasions where Ravel's dazzling orchestrations seemed little more than so much chic window dressing. Here, freshly restored, superbly lit, they acquired a new depth and purpose. Victor Alexandrovich Hartman would have recognised the images once more. Mussorgsky, too. As solo trumpet gave way to dark, grainy strings, his spirit loomed large. So "Gnomus" scurried from the opening promenade, Gergiev once again using the silences to convey the malignant dwarf's unsettling

disappearances. Alachrynosé bassoon then announced the troubadour, hang-dog saxophone carrying his sad song from way beyond the old castle walls. Gergiev kept the last note hanging pitifully in the air, almost inviting a response. But none came. Every note is a note of substance in a Gergiev performance. His characterisation of the rich Jew, Samuel Goldenberg - the opulent Hebrew theme richly sustained to the full value of every phrase - was a case in point, further serving to intensify the contrast with the poor, meaty-mouthed Schvaytse whose jibbering trumpet was encouraged to stifle his protestations almost as if he dare not speak. And when did we last hear a performance of the "Catacombs" where the echoes of sepulchral brass were so vividly conveyed in the dynamics. From out of that subterranean gloom, the flight of "Baba-Yaga" came as an unusually rude awakening, while "The Great Gate of Kiev" was flung wide enough to allow Boris Godunov himself freedom of the city. Sensationally good.

EDWARD SECKERSON

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Welshness is a state of mind

The playwright Ed Thomas draws his inspiration from his imagination, from Wales – and from a bizarre near-drowning in childhood. By Dominic Cavendish

When Ed Thomas was six years old, he fell into the river near his home in Cwmigell, while swinging from a tree trying to impress a schoolmate. By the time he had been fished out, 25 minutes later, his skin had turned blue. He was pronounced dead by his uncle, so efforts were focused on saving his mother, who had waded out into the flood tide even though she couldn't swim.

Ed Thomas survived because a man with "fleshy, alcoholic lips" gave him the kiss of life. That one of Wales's foremost living playwrights came out completely unscathed from this experience is a mystery he has wondered at ever since.

The incident provided the basis for a pivotal scene in Thomas's new play, *Gas Station Angel*, which has just opened at the Royal Court. On stage, it is not an old soak who revives the waterlogged child but the boy's elder brother. Rather than drawing them closer together, the act of rescue creates a lasting rift: the saviour, Bri, resents the special attention that the salvaged Marshall subsequently receives.

"He was special, he was Jesus; I never made the papers," he complains, by way of explaining how he became "a bad angel".

The miraculous tale of Ed Thomas, the boy who cheated death, made the *South Wales Evening Post* back then, and it makes the nationals now – only this time round, at the age of 35, Thomas is credited with restorative powers. Over the last 10 years, so the story goes, he has resuscitated that moribund entity Welsh theatre.

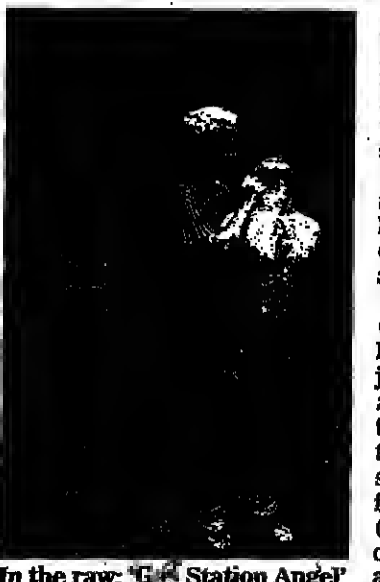
With his blond curls and cherubic complexion, blue jeans and black leather jacket, Thomas could easily pass for an angel who has pawed some of his heavenly lustre for the odd night on the town. Bereft of a set that refused to fit the space it was designed for, the bare stage at the Ambassador's Theatre, on which I find him chain-smoking furiously, seems to match the cultural landscape he describes growing up in: desolate.

"Welsh culture was invisible," he says, effortlessly plucking aphorisms out of thin air, honeying his phrases with his soft Swansea

accent.

"The Welsh didn't seem to be dignified enough for tragedy, funny enough for comedy or good enough at sex to be lovers. It was as if we were meant to f*** like pigs, eat trash food and generally be a laughing stock. You learnt more from watching television about downtown Melbourne than you ever did about downtown Merthyr, and when anyone talked about Welsh theatre they invariably meant *Under Milk Wood*."

Thomas's first play, *House of America*, was, he says, "just a sophisticated way of scrawling 'Kilroy was here' on a toilet wall. It was there just to let people know that we existed."



In the raw: 'Gas Station Angel'

film version, starring Sian Phillips, scooped four Welsh Bafas.

The incestuous relationship between brother Sid and sister Gwen in *House of America*, who make believe that they're Jack Kerouac and Joyce Johnson, took its cue from Thomas's own abortive attempt to live on borrowed icons. After he left Cardiff University, he spent "six years in London pretending to be Kerouac before I realised that I wasn't American and that I knew nothing about the Beat generation."

Since his debut, there has been a steady succession of plays that have chipped away at the prejudice that the only distinctive Welsh voices are to be found in all-male choirs. The work tackles the question of Welsh national identity with the kind of head-on force you would expect from a former rugby fullback, followed through with an imaginative sensibility that is completely unfettered, blending the familiar, even the stereotypical, with the supernatural.

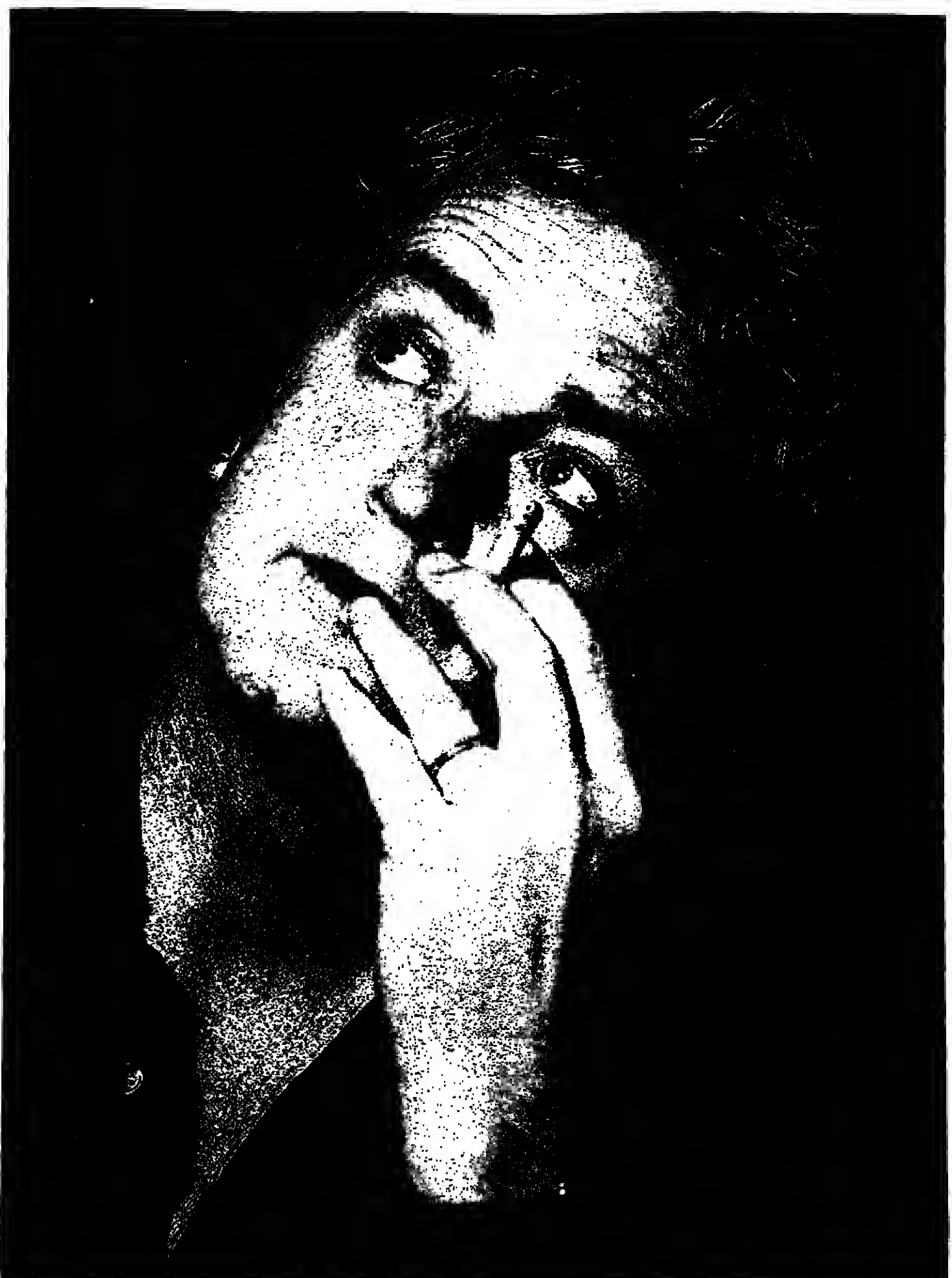
The plays are located in places that bear the attenuated feel of his hometown: "a bypass town with one street that stops being a street and turns into a mountain track."

Flowers of the Dead Red Sea (1991) was set "in a world of chains, knives, steel, blood and falling objects" and centred on an argument about the need for fiction between two slaughtermen (Thomas's father is a butcher, who never persuaded his son to follow in his footsteps). *East from the Gantry* (1992) was set in "a derelict house on a mountain surrounded by snow" and boasted a main character who imagined himself as Trampas from the Sixties Western TV series *The Virginian*.

Song from a Forgotten City (1995/96) "was about a smackhead who finds himself trapped in the fiction of a large metropolis."

"The theme is always imagination," he explains. "The only definition of a culture or nationhood is desire. Wales only really exists in the imagination."

Thomas is not, of course, the only person to have kindled a sense that there's a Welsh cultural renaissance, and growth in national self-esteem, in progress. The release of *House of America*, the movie, coincided with that of Kevin Allen's *Twinn Town*, widely dubbed "the Welsh *Trainspotting*". Peter Gill's



Ed Thomas: 'When I'm talking about Wales, I'm really talking about myself'

Nicola Kurtz

Cardiff East had pitched up at the National and the media had long since attached the label "taffcop" to the new bands currently riding hell for leather over the Severn Bridge (Catalonia, Super Furry Animals and Gorby's Zygodic Mynd, to name but three).

According to Thomas, *Gas Station Angel*, in which two lovers join imaginative forces to overcome their families' savage histories, reflects a mood of qualified optimism: "All of a sudden Welsh culture has been

outed. The attitude is: if you've got low self-confidence, or are feeling unhip or ungroovy, come to Wales; we may be f***ed but we're happy."

Thomas is certainly not lacking work at present. Y Cwmwl has been renamed "Fiction Factory" to reflect the company's diversification into television and film, and the artistic director is busy working on the third series of a home-grown sitcom, *Satellite City* – about "an American who comes to Wales looking for his roots and ends up sharing a bed with an old man".

He's also slated to film James Hawes' *Rancid Aluminium* this autumn. He recognises that *Gas Station Angel* will earn him the charge that "I'm away with the fairies. Everyone expects me to write relevant social issue plays but I think drama is life imagined rather than life reproduced. You have to re-imagine the future. People accuse me of not writing plays about mining communities."

"My job is to imagine a dramat-

Mick Jagger, Right to Reply, this section, page 5

Mining a vein of dark humour

THEATRE
BRASSÉD OFF
NATIONAL THEATRE
LONDON

IT IS a story full of belly laughs, full of the human spirit, but the National's adaptation of *Brassed Off*, directed by Deborah Payne, has a dark, forbidding feel to it – which is perfect for the play's grim subject.

The story – brass band saves the soul of a mining town – is well known by now, even for those who missed the film, but for all the knockabout northern humour, it feels as much like tragedy as comedy.

The colliery's fate hangs over proceedings, the towering pithead machinery dominating the stage like an ancient

monolith, while the men and their families wait for Grimley's certain demise as a mining community. Phil was jailed for his part in the miner's strike, the bailiffs are coming down the garden path and the best he can hope for is a few gigs as an inept party clown.

His son, Shane, is the narrator and chorus – wise beyond his years, guiding his mum and dad through the miseries of poverty, consoling his mum when things get especially tough. One of the two youngsters who play him, Luke Peace, was comfortable within a role that's crucial to the tone of the play.

Danny, Shane's grandfather and the band leader (the stalwart Peter Armitage) tries hard to keep the band going, all the while dying with lung disease.

"Your handkerchief's all black," Shane tells him. So it's not surprising he wants Grimley Colliery Band to survive. "Look at this tie," he says. "1881 it says – more than a hundred years this band had been together. That's seven strikes, three disasters, two world wars and one bloody lung depression."

The lads, though, are resigned to closure and the end of the band. There's increased incentive when Gloria comes along – she's management, as it happens, but plays fingerhorn like a goddess – though Freya Copeland's solo during the *Concierto De Orange Juice* (as Danny calls it) can't be overdone, unlike Tara Fitzgerald's in the movie. So when she fluffs a couple of notes suspension of disbelief lapses somewhat, an effect not

helped by the occasional impression of the plot flying by like a runaway train.

There are some great lines, though – "We had basses that sounded like a bulk delivery of syrup and figs," Danny tells the band after one inauspicious performance. Local lad Andy is Gloria's lover, a bit slow on the uptake. "It must be for Andy that they read the main points of the news again," one of his mates says. He gets some stick later for sleeping with the enemy – but, as Phil says, "With legs like that wrapped around you, you don't ask for a reference."

There's lots of fun to be had, but it's still a mordant piece, bitter for everything the Tories did. At the end, as Danny accepts the winning trophy at the Albert Hall then hands it back as a

protest against the destruction of the mining industry, all of a sudden it was like an agit-prop meeting, with Danny making seemingly a genuine speech. "If this lot were whales or bloody seals," he says, gesturing to the band, "you'd be up in arms."

There is no triumphalism at the end – as the band files off the Albert Hall stage and Danny shuffles away, bent over, Shane tells us that he dies – not like the film, with its upbeat ending. But *Brassed Off* is still a fine play, all the better for its refusal to be merely a good laugh.

In rep at the Olivier until 24 June (0171-923 2252). This review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper.

CHRIS MAUME

Dance to the music

CD
JOHN'S BOOK OF ALLEGED DANCES; Gnarly Buttons (by John Adams) KRONOS QUARTET LONDON SINFONIETTA

AFTER Steve Reich's multifaceted *Different Trains*, Kronos switch to John Adams and streetcars rattling from beach to town and back again.

John's Dances are "alleged" because, as he says, "steps for them have yet to be invented". Hotfoot rhythms on a sampled prepared piano kick the gravel

as we encounter streetcars in motion, furious cello triads being ridden "like a rodeo", a madcap hoedown, a swinging "Pavane" for Kronos's Joan Jeanrenaud "who's so fine", then "a swinging scat song for four voices in parallel motion", a bluesy "Banana", a tough-grained toccata, slithery harmonics for "Alligator Escalator" and a streetcar ride back to the ocean.

Adams's junkyard antics will have you cocking an ear, or dancing, or both; but not so Gnarly Buttons, darker music that takes an occasional glance back at Schoenberg's *Sere-*

nade. It was written for British clarinetist Michael Collins – "whose way of playing most approximates my own ideal," says Adams – and ends with a cool, simple song, "Put Your Loving Arms around Me".

The London Sinfonietta performs with their customary ease and facility and the recorded sound does them full justice. Another Nonesuch bull's-eye, then, and renewed confirmation that good new music can entertain without artistic compromise.

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ROB COWAN

EXIT POLL

WHAT THE PUNTERS THOUGHT ABOUT BRASSÉD OFF



IN THE first half it seemed as though the cast were overwhelmed by the size of the theatre; the story took over in the second half and the whole thing came alive. There was a tendency to ram the message home a bit too much: it's not subtle. Having said that, I did enjoy it.

Tony Betts, banker

I FOUND it very moving, particularly the final scene when the community comes forward en masse, with the brass band playing behind them.

St John Sandringham, publisher

I THINK it compared very

favourably with the film. There are obviously things you can't do in the theatre that you can on film (and vice versa) but they worked with the constraints and carried it off very well.

Ruth Sayle, homeopath

I DIDN'T imagine that the stage version would be quite so poignant. I was expecting it to be played as more of a comedy.

Janet Mascarenas, education project organiser

IT'S A lot darker than the film, which has more of a feel-good and Full Monty-ish flavour. On the whole, I thought it was better than the screen version. Of

course, it would have been even better if Ewan MacGregor had been in it!

Cristina Hutchins, hairdresser

MY DAD'S from Barnsley so I thought it was very true to life; the down-to-earthness of it all was very convincing. I think they did it well and I'd recommend it to my friends.

Marilese Turnbull, who runs a charity for street children

IT WAS actually quite disturbing. You could read it as an archaeology of the dying days of Thatcherism. I particularly liked the way it showed how a

town's fabric can fall apart when the main source of employment has disappeared. The performances were generally good, especially the role of the band leader Danny, who came across very powerfully.

David Burrows, market researcher

I FOUND the narrative quite episodic at times – it seemed that some scenes were just put there to get through the plot as quickly as possible. But that didn't spoil my enjoyment: there were plenty of well-crafted lines and some riotously funny moments.

Alison Davis, office manager

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IN MY WARDROBE

A LOT OF BLACK, A LOT OF WHITE, A BIT OF COLOUR - AND LOTS OF BANGLES, SAYS WENDY DAGWORTHY (ABOVE)

WENDY DAGWORTHY has been head of the BA fashion course at Central St Martin's School of Art and Design for almost 10 years, a post which she leaves later this month to become professor of fashion at the Royal College of Art. She also designs the Liberty Collection. Here she reveals her fashion secrets.

"When I open my wardrobe, a double-layered affair which takes up an entire wall of my bedroom, I see a lot of black, a lot of white and a bit of colour. I wear the black in winter, and black, white and grey in summer, but I do have some brightly coloured Indian skirts that I wear occasionally. I used to have a whole room for my clothes; I'm a hoarder, and find it hard to throw things away."

"I still wear a lot of my own Wendy Dagworthy clothes; in fact I've kept all of my collections. They are in big trunks dotted around the house and disguised as tables, or covered with throws. I would never part with them; I would only donate them to the V&A. One of my favourite own-label pieces are broderie anglaise baggy trousers in black or white that I wear underneath dresses. I also have a lot of Betty Jackson, Egg, Yohji Yamamoto, Comme

des Garçons and Romeo Gigli, and even some Prada and Miu Miu that I bought in their knock-down-price warehouse in Milan last summer. I also have a passion for unusual shoes; I've got loads, mainly flat, but I still have the Manolo Blahnik snakeskin wedges I got married in 25 years ago, and the dress. I also collect bangles; my husband buys them for me, and I like to wear lots - the longer I have them the more special they become.

"Funny enough I don't think I've got a single bit of graduates' work. I love Antonio Berardi, but his clothes are a bit too tight for me, but I would wear Sonja Nuttall - I just haven't got round to buying any yet. I like to feel unrestricted, comfortable and relaxed in what I wear. My theory is if you don't look comfy you don't look right, and I stick to that. I don't get influenced by trends, and being a fashion tutor I can't influence my students either. My main thing is to buy things I like, it doesn't matter whether it's designer label or not. But I must say it's been nice to be able to buy my own clothes again from Liberty; they went into the store last month."

MELANIE RICKEY

HOT THING

HND FASHION COURSE IN SPORTSWEAR AND STREETWEAR

FOR MOST fashion students, Umbro is a more familiar name than Ungaro. They might leave college dreaming of the Paris catwalks, but the average student wouldn't know what to do with a couture dress if it fell on them. Instead, they are far more familiar with labels such as Nike, Adidas and YMC.

Sportswear and utility streetwear is a growth area - both on and off the sportsfield. Even Prada has got in on the act, with a new range of hooded jackets, reflective Puffa jackets, and weird, moulded, aerodynamic shoes. Strange then that few students are given the opportunity to specialise in sportswear while at college.

In September, a unique two-year HND course launches at

Salford University with aspirations to send graduates into jobs with companies such as Stussy, X-Girl, Henri Lloyd and Nike. The course is geared towards turning out designers who understand the clothes that young people really wear, introducing them to relevant placements in industry, new sportswear technology and high-performance fabrics.

If you think you could improve on the England strip, find Ralph Lauren's sportswear more stimulating than his evening wear, or want to design the ultimate snowboarding trousers, this could be for you. Late applicants are still being considered.

Inquiries: Lucy Jones, Course Leader, HND Fashion, Salford University, 0161-295 6094.

TAMSI BLANCHARD

FASHION TYPES



the Fashion Student

Jason Brooks

As this year's students graduate, how are last year's crop faring? By Melanie Rickey

Succeeding by degrees in the hothouse of fashion

THIS WEEK almost 1,000 fashion students are exhibiting their work on the banks of the River Thames as part of BHS Graduate Fashion Week. Of that number only one-third will present their clothes on the catwalk, perhaps five or ten will get "noticed", and possibly one will win the elusive accolade of being "discovered". Each graduate is impatiently waiting for the finger of fate - just like the one in the lottery adverts - to say "It's You".

Being a fashion graduate is the Nineties equivalent of being an Eighties dance/drama graduate, best portrayed by the television series *Fame*,

where the students are constantly waiting to be discovered. It can happen, and in the Nineties it has happened a lot in fashion. Russell Tovey, Suzanne Clements and Inacio Ribeiro, Andrew Flonda and Ben Pearce, Sonja Nuttall and Antonio Berardi have all gone on to greater things. But success doesn't come that easily for most graduates. They have to work at it, and talent doesn't always mean instant success. We tracked down six of the class of '97, from five colleges, and found that top marks and prizes do not help in the grand scheme of things, but sheer hard work always gets results.

MARCUS CLAYTON, 24

Fashion Design Womenswear, graduated from Central Saint Martin's with a first and got his first job last week at Louis Vuitton after a year of trying.

"After the show I called the Pace pretending to be my own PR, and they gave me some press, but that was about it. I had no job offers, so I put together a CV and sent about 30 of them to the big fashion houses in Paris. Then I went to Paris myself, stayed in a youth hostel, and



spent days in a phone-box trying to get interviews. I had done work experience at Jean Colonna, but there were no jobs. I got two interviews at Mugler and that fell through, too. I had to come back to England and work at Liberty as a sales assistant. In November last year I did it again, nothing happened and I felt really flat. Of the five students who got firsts in my year, two got jobs, one did an MA, one I don't know, and then there's me. I suppose St Martin's is a subconscious education, it teaches you to make the most of an opportunity. In all I've had about 30 interviews. I went back to Paris for the third time three weeks ago, and finally got offered a position at Louis Vuitton. I started on Monday. I suppose I'm excited about it, but Jean Colonna is still my dream job."

NICK SELLARS, 33

BA Hons Fashion Design, graduated from University of Northumbria with a First last summer. Now works as a designer at Nigel Cabourn and consults on the new Virgin range of clothes, to be unveiled in September.

"When I got my first proper fashion job it was the culmination of 13 years of trying. From 1985 to 1987 I did a fashion course, but ended up designing T-shirts for Asda, and was not happy. I decided I needed a



degree that taught me hands-on technical fashion design, not high-end fashion, so I saved up for a few years, moved to Newcastle, and did the degree. I specialised in practical menswear. The Christmas before graduation Nigel Cabourn approached me with a job - I think someone recommended me - and I accepted. It had always been my goal to get a job straightaway. I began it two weeks before my degree.

College was like an incubation period, it was essential to me as a designer, but a year on the job has taught me so much more. It's a lot of administration and communication, not just sketching, and I also travel abroad to review bits of prototype garments. The best bit so far has been seeing the clothes I worked on being worn. My biggest lesson was realising how long it took to get where I wanted. I really had to believe in myself, and it eventually paid off."



JO FRANCIS, 22

Graduated with a 2:2 in Fashion Design from Nottingham Trent and is now a trainee buyer with the designer department of Debenhams.

"I knew before I finished my degree that I didn't want to be a designer. I found the design team frustrating when I was on placement at Burton, and wanted something more solid, with good training, and I thought buying would be ideal. I started looking for a job in the final year. I had 10 interviews at places



like Harvey Nichols, M&S, Next and Dorothy Perkins, but no luck. After graduation I joined a recruitment agency; they weren't much help either, so I wrote to every high street store I could think of telling them what I could do. I got the job here in August 1997 when Debenhams were just setting up the Designers' team, a department which deals with the diffusion collections from Maria Grachvogel, Ben de Lisi, and Pearce Flonda. My job title is buyers administration assistant. I love the job, it's interesting, creative, and I'm learning to use the computer, but you do have to work very hard. I'm glad I didn't pin my hopes on Graduate Fashion Week like so many of my friends. They thought they would be snapped up. I knew that wouldn't happen to me."

MARKUS LUPFER, 26

Harrow, graduated with a First in Fashion Design Womenswear last year and immediately began a job as designer at Clements Ribeiro. He also designs his own-label collection.

"I started to learn about fashion at home in Germany, but I was bored. So I came to England and entered the second year of the Harrow course. Almost immediately I got a placement with Clements Ribeiro, and I also won a commendation in an RSA competition, which was



very encouraging. When I graduated I already knew I had a job at Clements Ribeiro. In fact I started working before I graduated, and they let me prepare for my show in their studio. After the show I took my collection to Koh Samui in Covent Garden. They put it in the shop and it sold out. The owner Paul Sexton then asked me to do another collection, so I spent evenings and weekends working at home. Everything is hand-made and finished, and most items are unique. The second collection went into the shop in February. This was very exciting. Meanwhile, I am doing a full-time job at Clements Ribeiro, which I love. I just want to be creative and to understand how a structured and organised business works. It is very professional at Clements Ribeiro. The most important thing I have learnt is that being a fashion designer is 20 per cent design, the rest is coping with the business."

RENEA PRAIT, 23

Fashion Design Womenswear, graduated with a 2:1 from Kingston and started her first job at Name Workshop two months ago, after struggling on the dole.

"People thought I would do well straightaway. I won the RSA Masters Medal and the British Fashion Council Student Designer of the Year in 1996, and other smaller awards. When I graduated I had won almost £4,000, but had not done a

placement. Everyone thinks they are going to be spotted and swept off their feet, but nothing happened."

"I did a few interviews, joined a couple of agencies, and even thought about setting up my own label. Instead, I went on the dole and sent my CV everywhere. I think it was because I had no business experience that finding a job was difficult. I didn't know about clothes production, or office stuff, just the creative side."

ANN-LOUISE ROSWALD, 24 Fashion Print, graduated from Central Saint Martin's with a First last year. She now runs her own label from home and has just received New Generation sponsorship for her next collection.

"Ours was the first year who had to be selected for the press show of Graduate Fashion Week, and I was lucky enough to get through. I based my final collection on travels in Tibet, with lots of hand-printed sheepskin pieces, and afterwards I was selected for the big Gala show; from that I won the Real Sheepskin Award and £500, which was really exciting. Three weeks later, Liberty

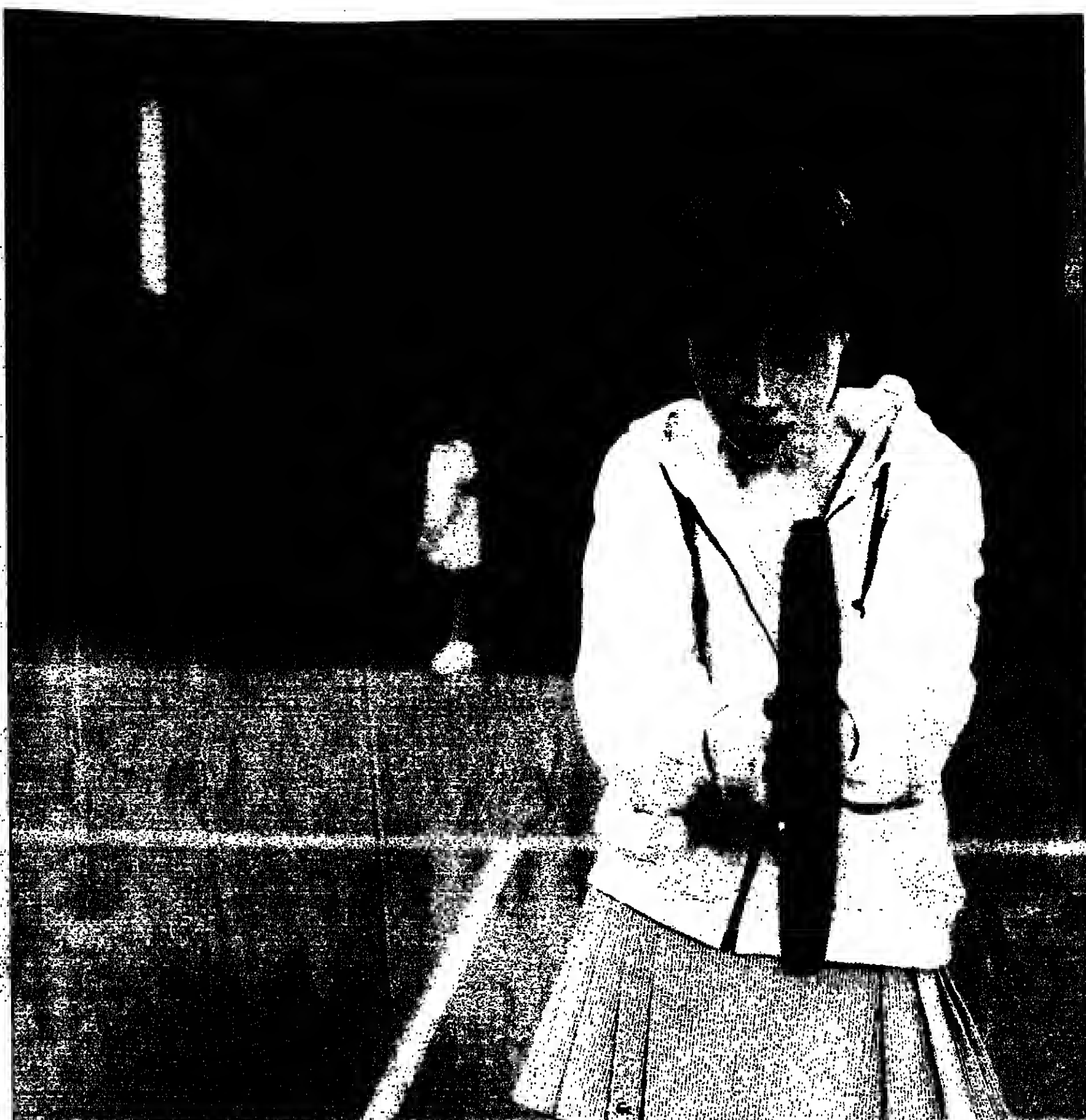


came to see my clothes, and asked me to do a collection. That made up my mind, and with help from my partner, Nick, I spent all summer sorting it out. In November, Liberty ordered seven new garments and some sheepskin from my graduation collection, which went into the shop last month. After that I had six weeks to get the next one ready in time for London Fashion Week last February. It's been a rollercoaster, but we got some orders. I was all ready to go to India and meditate after graduation, but instead I've had to learn how to run a small business. I haven't even had time to see my clothes in Liberty yet."

كلنا من الأصل

Oh, I say! Whatever happened to the frilly knickers?

Follow the Wimbledon stars –
tennis chic can really improve your
swing. By Tamsin Blanchard



Main picture, yellow vest, £19.99 by Dans-ez (mail order and inquiries 01843 866300); turquoise and white pleated skirt, £79.99 by Lacoste, from Boutique Lacoste (0171-439 2213); white hooded jacket £50 by Fred Perry, from Lillywhites (0171-307 3500). Below left, white hooded top, £35 from Warehouse (0171-278 3491); yellow shorts, £20.99 by Dans-ez; sweatbands, £6 by Lacoste. Below centre, pink Aertex vest, £52 by Bernstock Spiers from Ten, 10 Columbia Road, London E2 (0171-729 7229); white pedal pushers, £35 from Warehouse. Below right, turquoise and white stripe jacket, £159 (part of a tracksuit), by Lacoste

"OOH, TENNIS fashion. Isn't that all frilly knickers and short skirts?" I happen to be speaking with Antoni, half of the design duo Antoni & Alison. "Hmmm," I agree. The tabloids certainly think "frilly knickers" every year as the strawberries are hand-picked and the cream freshly churned in time for Wimbledon. Two headlines in particular stand out in my memory: "Skirty Love" and "Welcome to Wimbledon". Athena posters have a lot to answer for. "I suppose it's not frilly knickers any more," sighs Antoni. "It's probably all high-tech and heavily breathable."

The idea of heavily breathable tennis dresses is one that could really take off. Tennis, and the young stars who play it, have become thoroughly sexy. Anna Kournikova and Martina Hingis, the two glamorous teenage players who will be the focus of sports and fashion commentators alike when they take to the centre court at the end of the month have certainly set the pulses racing.

American GQ made Hingis its cover girl this month. Not only will her glamour image boost magazine sales, it will guarantee a rise in television viewing figures for Wimbledon too.

Die-hard fans will already be familiar with Fred Perry's range of T-shirts and pleated skirts. At the David Lloyd tennis club, in Raynes Park, south London, where we took these pictures last week, the courts were packed with women practising their volleys. This is the place for ladies who lunch, training with a personal tennis coach in the morning, followed by a light lunch and a match before a swim and a sauna.

Louis Vuitton sports holdalls are all the rage. But there is no nonsense with frilly knickers. Most club members cover up with a pair of Lycra cycling shorts under their skirts.

In the locker-room, talk is of whether this year's limited-edition polo shirt by Fred Perry is better than the one by Lacoste.

Both companies have declared this year as the polo shirt's 65th anniversary. Lacoste's special edition is a reproduction of a classic V-neck shirt from the early Sixties; Fred Perry's slim fit shirt is also from the Sixties, in the original shades of khaki and camel. It's another world.

And the polo style works off the tennis courts too. Lacoste has a whole range of tennis-inspired womenswear, such as trademark cotton pique wrap dresses and an ankle-length polo dress, with prices starting at £85.

Away from the famous names of tennis, Red or Dead, Bernstock Spiers and Warehouse have all come up with clothes that are streetwear with an eye on the ball boy. Warehouse has the skirt of the season – a little razor-pleated number that is just about long enough to be worn in polite company. Bernstock Spiers and Red or Dead have both used the tennis favourite, Aertex. Which brings us back to the notion of breathable tennis dresses. Aertex must be one of the oldest high-tech fabrics around, the brainwave of one MP and two doctors who formed the Aertex Company manufacturing the sweat-friendly cotton fabric in 1888.

In those days, women tennis players were restricted to a slower game than is played today, not least because they played in long skirts and long-sleeved tunics topped off with a hat. It was not until 1919 that play was allowed without corsets. Not much heavy breathing there.

Even today, there are strict rules about what can and can't be worn on the tennis court. The Lawn Tennis Association frowns on all-in-one body suits, short shorts, crop tops and anything that flouts the conventions of the neat white Tee and pleated skirt.

It seems strange that women still choose to wear flirty skirts rather than practical shorts like the boys. But then tennis starlets obviously like the attention – although there is no excuse for frilly knickers, on or off the court.



Photographer: Jon Mortimer Stylist: Holly Wood
Hair: James Mooney for Daniel Hersheson at Julie Bramwell Make-up: Charlotte Day at Rockit
Model: Luba at Select Photographer's assistant: Mark Moon
Shot on location at David Lloyd Club, Raynes Park, London SW20



'I'm not going there for the career. I'm going for the dream'

Alber Elbaz is to take over the reins of Yves Saint Laurent's ready-to-wear. By Ian Phillips

DAWN MELLO, the president of the American department store Bergdorf Goodman, could well have clairvoyant powers. Last year, she said that designer Alber Elbaz was "destined for stardom". Last Friday, Elbaz was appointed designer of Yves Saint Laurent's ready-to-wear – a move set to make him an overnight star. On 31 October, he will leave his present position at Guy Laroche and present his first collection for Saint Laurent next March.

His new post is one of the most coveted in fashion. Saint Laurent was the first to understand the power of ready-to-wear and opened his first Rive Gauche boutique in September 1966. Today, there are 50

free-standing boutiques throughout the world and 100 in-store shops. Elbaz may be the first ever outside designer to be entrusted with the creation of the women's ready-to-wear, but it is an open secret that Saint Laurent has not personally designed the line for a number of years. Instead, the house's studios have churned out the old classics and, though beautiful, the collections have long failed to be innovative.

"The fashion system has changed and M Saint Laurent has realised that he will never adapt to it," said a spokesman for the house. "So, he

feels that it is better to dedicate himself to his art: *haute couture*." The house has apparently been looking for a replacement for the past two years, but it was difficult to see just who they would find. While young designers almost unanimously express their admiration for Saint Laurent, the master himself is rather disparaging of the younger generation.

In the Fifties, Christian Dior took the young Saint Laurent under his wing and primed him as his successor. Saint Laurent himself has rather disappointingly not shown the

same altruism. He has never really helped to promote any of his assistants and has not even issued a personal statement about Elbaz. It is rumoured that he has not even met the Morocco-born designer and the appointment is most certainly the decision of the Saint Laurent president, Pierre Berge.

Berge was on the front row of Elbaz's most recent show for Guy Laroche in March and says that he chose him for a number of reasons. "First, he wanted somebody who would design exclusively for Saint Laurent and 'Alber is the only de-

signer of his level and talent who does not have his own label". Second, he wanted someone who would bring a bit of American commercial know-how with him. Elbaz worked as assistant to Geoffrey Beene in New York for eight years and has proclaimed that "a designer should not be embarrassed to admit wanting to sell". Apparently, there was also a "sentimental" reason for the appointment: "Alber was born in North Africa like Yves. He has the light and colours of Africa in his eyes."

Elbaz was born in Casablanca on 12 June 1961, but was brought up in

Tel Aviv. He started sketching at the age of four ("I would do clothes for the Queen of England") and started to make a mark in Israel during his days as a student. After graduation, he went to New York with \$800 and worked for a downtown design company for a couple of years before hooking up with Beene.

In June 1994, he was appointed design director of the flagging Guy Laroche label and his three collections to date have been huge successes with both press and buyers alike. He has been praised for his perfect tailoring, his beautiful sense

of colour and his "well-made, sophisticated, sexy clothes with a minimum of fussiness". He has also managed to update Laroche classics and it will be exciting to see his modern take on the Saint Laurent smoking and safari suit. A new studio will be set up for him in a town mansion adjacent to Saint Laurent's Parisian *couture* house.

Taking over from the master will not be an easy task, but Elbaz does not seem to be too daunted. In the past he has claimed that "I don't want to be a star... I just want to make beautiful clothes". About his move to Saint Laurent, he says: "I'm not going there for the career. I'm going for the dream."

ON THE FLOOR

THE DIARY OF A TRADER

NEIL HAD an engagement this week: his own. Unfortunately, when he announced it no one believed him. After all, not many women are daft enough to want to spend their life with a man who makes Gaza look refined.

The mystery woman turned out to be Kylie, the bottle blonde bombshell from settlements, who fell for his charms when she saw his new Porsche less than two months ago. The resulting dinner date must have been a success, and the whirlwind romance culminated on Saturday with a proposal over a slap-up meal at Rozzard's best Italian restaurant.

Neil has spent the whole week giving me smug yet baleful looks of the "If you'd played your cards right it could have been you" variety. Worse still, I've started to have terrible dreams in which it is me, and wake up shaking with horror.

Even leaving Neil out of it, Laura and I are not convinced there are such things as joys of marriage. "I mean," Laura said, frowning, "if marriage is so great, how come so many people get divorced?" "Well," I told her, "apparently, we'll feel quite differently about it the minute we're in our thirties, and we'll suddenly become desperate to settle down. That's what it says in the magazines. It must be true."

"Oh," Laura said. "I thought it was men who suddenly got desperate to be married, and all this stuff about us being more likely to be run over by a bus than get hitched was just to frighten us into tying the knot with the first bloke who asked us."

"What gave you that idea?" "Neil, actually," she replied. "He was telling me earlier how sick of take-aways he was, and how nice it would be not to spend Sunday night ironing his shirts for the week. I wonder if Kylie knows what she's letting herself in for." Not that it matters, we decide. If she ever realises she's made a terrible mistake, we can always sell Kylie our long list of ways to get rid of odious Neil (number 352: drug him, stick "meat is murder" T-shirt on him, and leave him at Smithfield Market).

"That friend of Sash's would approve of the T-shirt, at least," Laura points out. So I laugh and realise that, what with all the talk about Neil, I haven't yet told her how Beanie coped with being the token arty at my dinner for City friends. I'd had high hopes that he would cope badly: after all, he was the one who was so vile to me when I was the token suit last week ("capitalist bitch", indeed). And I'd deliberately invited people I knew would take exception to his lifestyle, including Jasper, who thinks anyone who works less than a 70-hour week is a pathetic scrounger.

The first shock is that the caterer turns out to have been at prep school with one guest, and we nearly have to send out for pizza because they spend so long reminiscing. Luckily, the gingered poussins, when they arrive, show no sign of neglect and everyone tucks in happily.

Beanie arrives late, not in the least bit apologetic. I'm just about to say something terse when Jasper suddenly roars out, "Beanie, old boy, what the hell brings you here?" and Beanie goes scarlet and stomps over and they give each other great matey slaps on the back.

"Meet Beanie, everyone," Jasper booms, "my old mate from Winchester. Jammy bastard got left an absolute fortune by his grandfather in our last year, so he'll never have to do a day's work in his life."

THE TRADER



Chris Swinson says professional bodies exist "to maintain a culture in which practitioners are reminded that ... they should conduct themselves accordingly."

Philip Meech

The Glory of Mr Swinson

The new president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants is no mere number cruncher. By Roger Trapp

Anybody who has had even the slightest dealings with Chris Swinson will not have been a bit surprised that he concluded his first speech as president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales with a bit of verse.

Over the years, Mr Swinson has been a powerful counterbalance to the idea that accountants are all dull number crunchers whose favourite bedtime reading is a DTI investigation report. A distinctly larger-than-life character, he has enlivened even the dullest meetings of the institute's council with well-rounded "bons mots", quick repartee and the odd disquisition on obscure avenues of popular culture.

Accordingly, he leaps to the defence of Rudyard Kipling, author of one of the two poems chosen for his speech. Explaining that the poet had been much misunderstood as a jingoist, he says that "The Glory of The Garden" is "a great favourite", with a theme that devalues those who sit around and take the credit "while better men than we" keep things moving.

Though Mr Swinson - with his old-fashioned suits, courtly manners and fondness for good living - can appear the epitome of the "old school tie" sort who traditionally run our great institutions, he is concerned that office-holders like himself should not get carried away by their own self-importance. And he claims the onerous duty of the body's members to read the poem and its companion, "warty bligens the toad" by the New York journalist Don Marquis, "seemed to be effective".

A deep thinker who does not always seem to find it easy to understand why others disagree with him, Mr Swinson has not always had things his own way. Several years ago, he found himself suddenly out of his job as national managing partner at the then leading second-tier firm BDO Binder

Hamlyn after what is generally assumed to be a dispute over the firm's future strategy. The firm is now part of the Arthur Andersen organisation and Mr Swinson has assumed a senior minister-without-portfolio-type role at Stoy Hayward, which has taken his old firm's place in the BDO international network and has set itself up as a vowedly anti-merger.

Nevertheless, for all Mr Swinson's insistence that it is Kipling's "poor bloody infantry" that matter, the institute is - at what could turn out to be a crucial period in its history - blessed with having three big names at its top. Elected alongside Mr Swinson at last week's annual meeting were Dame Sheila Masters, the KPMG partner who will combine the deputy presidency with her existing high-profile roles at the Bank of England and other parts of the public sector, and Graham Ward, a former boxing blue who has been leading the institute's battle for reform of the laws concerning auditors' liability for negligence, becomes vice-president.

The idea, says Mr Swinson, is that - as each of them assumes the presidency - they will continue with the policies being put in place now, so that things actually change. "We believe that we have an opportunity for three years to build on the strategy achieved under Chris Laine [his predecessor as president]."

Pointing out that it is impossible to change a bureaucracy as large as the institute overnight, he adds:

"It needs pressure and it needs office holders who were prepared to live with rocking seas for a while. The trouble with being president is that there's a bit of you that wants a nice time. But I believe

you're not worth very much if you're only there to have a nice time. The real test is consistency over a period."

Certainly, the stop-change approach created by having presidents come in for a year, often on very different agendas, has in the past handed the initiative over to the organisation's secretariat - leading one disillusioned office-holder to remark that his only decisions were about the menus for the dinners he hosted and prompting the review that has begun to be acted on.

One idea - to give presidents longer terms of office - has not been acted on, largely because of practical problems. But the examination by Peter Gerrard QC has led to the president assuming more executive powers alongside a senior officer and devolving certain powers to a chairman of the council. And Mr Swinson believes that having a group of senior office-holders coming in on what amounts to one ticket will help reinforce the changes.

"The three of us are clear about the discomfort there will be. We don't want to create needless uncertainty, but we can't afford to dodge the fundamental questions that members have been asking for some time," he says.

Mr Swinson is more aware than many of his colleagues of the outside world's perception that the accountancy profession is not as effective as it might be about disciplining members who err from the straight and narrow. Back in the early 1990s, he - at a time when others in his profession were taking a more defensive line - admitted that there had been "a decline in the quality of accounting". This he attributed to the prevalence of financial engineering techniques later taken to task in the analyst

Terry Smith's book *Accounting for Growth*. But he pointed out the intention to stop the rot demonstrated by the setting up of the Accounting Standards Board under David (now Sir David) Tweedie, and - eight years later - believes that the initiative has been largely successful. However, he points out that the real test will be posed by another economic downturn.

It is therefore understandable that he was given the task of coming up with a proposal for change that would meet critics' objections about self-regulation at the same time as keeping the role within the organisation's remit.

Though not everybody is agreed that even Mr Swinson's acknowledged intellect has come up with an effective solution, a scheme has nevertheless been drawn up and presented to the Government. It is a matter of frustration to him that ministers have not yet given their verdict on the plan.

But, despite his personal interest, Mr Swinson does not believe this is the most urgent issue facing the organisation. That accolade belongs to dealing with members' interests. There is such a wide variety of occupations covered by those holding the qualification chartered accountant that the institute has to find a way of serving them more effectively, he says.

This is behind the decision to divide the organisation into the directorates dealing with education and training, discipline and professional conduct and members' interests. Heads of these departments are at present being recruited. It is also behind the recently published document "Forging a New Partnership with Members" and - perhaps even more importantly - the consultation exercise on education and train-

ing that is now under way. Previous attempts to introduce a series of training options around a central core of skills have failed to win over members keen to protect what they see as a special qualification. But the continuing popularity in the business arena of the MBA and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants examinations is putting intense pressure on the institute.

In addition to making the initial qualification fit the present requirements, it is essential that efforts are made to enhance continuing professional development. As Mr Swinson said in his speech at last week's annual meeting: "Most of our members will understand the commercial reality that anyone who does not develop and enhance his professional skills will suffer at the hands of the market."

Very much aware that these and other initiatives will require a lot of hard work and possibly even more diplomacy, he is, however, sure this is a fight worth fighting.

"Professional bodies matter," he says, as if in answer to those who feel that organisations such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants have outlived their usefulness. "Professional bodies exist to maintain a culture in which practitioners are reminded that there is a public interest in what they are doing and that they should therefore conduct themselves accordingly."

He believes that initiatives like his regulation reform proposals will help keep the institute alive, but he stresses that it is important that neither him nor those around him rest on their laurels. Because circumstances and public perceptions change, the organisation's role will necessarily change.

If it lets the world pass it by, there is a danger of it becoming another dining club. "I belong to dining clubs and they can be fun, but I don't want to spend the rest of my life in dining clubs," he says.

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Rule 4.106 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that the Firm of **HAMILTON FISH RESTAURANT LIMITED** is a company registered in England No. 01541111 and is now being liquidated by the undersigned Liquidator on 3 June 1998 by Appointment and Consent.
Dated 3 June 1998
PANCOS BLADES Liquidator

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UPDATE

Joining the Stock Exchange
HW GROUP, the recruitment company best known for its financial arm, Harrison Willis, plans to seek a listing on the London Stock Exchange, in a move expected to give it a market value of about £40m. The company, one of the stars of the latest Independent 100 listing of fastest-growing private companies, dates back to the Fifties, but it has grown especially rapidly since a management buyout in 1997.

How to avoid liability
FINANCE DIRECTORS have changed their minds to support the idea of accountants reducing personal risk from legal claims by forming limited liability partnerships, says a survey by Reed Accountancy Personnel and Accountancy Age; 51 per cent of 200 finance directors questioned backed limited liability partnerships. When asked the same question in 1994, 39 per cent supported such limits on liability.

High price of leverage
COMPETITIVE PRESSURE among venture capitalists is leading them to pay high prices for businesses using highly-levered deal structures, resulting in leveraged buyouts reaching a price peak, according to Price Waterhouse's business regeneration unit. Most venture capitalists do not acknowledge overpayment as a major cause of failure in their portfolio or believe that high prices are likely to give rise to significant problems in the coming years.

Rules of the IASC

ACCOUNTANTS ARE being urged to let the International Accounting Standards Committee get on with the job of devising a single system of accounting rules for the world. Ken Wild, technical partner at Deloitte & Touche and joint author of *International Accounting Standards: A Guide to Preparing Accounts*, says: "International companies need one set of accounting standards and one only. The IASC should provide them."

The looming euro

THE VAST majority of multinational companies predict that they will have to revamp their compensation packages for staff working abroad following the introduction of the euro next January, yet only a quarter of them have started to look at the problem seriously, according to a survey by KPMG.

Cambridge is top of the league

CAMBRIDGESHIRE RESIDENTS are much more inclined to start up in business than their counterparts elsewhere, according to research from Barclays Bank. Its newly launched "entrepreneurial index" shows that the county has twice as many entrepreneurs as a proportion of the working population as the national average. Among the factors putting the county at the top of the league table are the growth of tourism and high-tech industries linked to Cambridge University and a thriving industrial base.

Incredible shrinking council

A communications revolution is set to turn Surrey into the first virtual local authority. By Paul Gosling

THE FIRST virtual local authority is on the horizon with "hot desking", a telecentre, video conferencing, home working and the most advanced call centre in local government.

It is significant that the council taking these steps is Surrey, regarded as one of the most efficient authorities in Britain and whose management initiatives have been widely copied. Equally significant is the fact that the re-engineering of Surrey was generated by a potential deficit and that new systems are cutting millions of pounds off the council's annual expenditure.

For several years Surrey had been spending above its income. In 1996 there was a fundamental review of expenditure examining every service, reducing the base budget by

£25m. What Surrey did not predict was that this would become the model for all other councils - under the Best Value policy every authority will be expected to conduct its own fundamental review.

The outcomes for Surrey are radical. At the heart of it is the desire to rationalise the council's property portfolio and convert fixed into variable costs. The council owns 90 office buildings, but in five years this should be reduced to about 35. There is even an open question about whether the council will sell County Hall, which is in Kingston-upon-Thames, now part of London, and hence outside the area it serves.

Surrey has already conducted what it believes is the largest private finance initiative contract signed by a council when it disposed of half of

its residential care homes. The county has also brought libraries, adult education and youth services together. "These services were really doing much the same thing," says Michael Jennings, director for partnerships and community affairs, and previously assistant chief executive in charge of corporate management. "They were all about recreation, life-long learning and public information."

Bringing services together means fewer buildings and reduced

costs - as well as helping generate income; one of the new integrated centres contains a Post Office, and discussions are taking place about installing cashpoints in others.

A programme of transferring ownership of community buildings is under way. A parish or town council might buy a property, and residents have formed trusts to take over community centres. Grants may be obtained from the county council for running costs, and applications are encouraged from

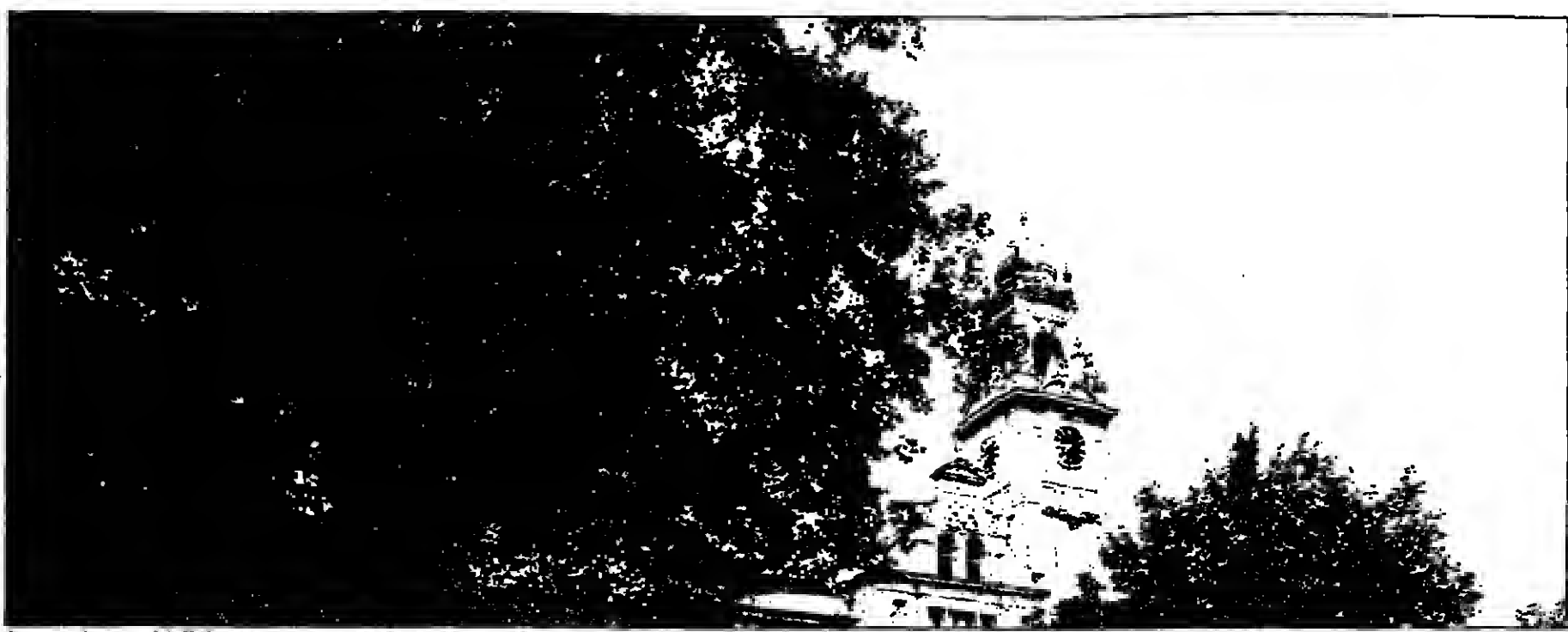
other bodies, such as the lottery. "Hot desking" also emerged from the review, encouraged by the desire to achieve a big reduction in office space. Even Mr Jennings now operates without sole use of a desk, sharing an open-plan office, conducting some work in meeting rooms, sometimes working from home and using a lap-top to communicate with the council's intranet.

The next step is to create a call centre. Many councils talk of call centres, but most really mean one-

stop shops, which the public can drop into about any problem. Surrey has dismissed this option because of the cost. Instead it is modelling itself on the private sector, where an increasing proportion of business is handled over the phone. This will cut costs, while producing a more integrated service, believes Surrey.

But saving money is, in a sense, the easy part. Doing so without damaging service provision is the crunch. According to Audit Commission performance indicators,

Surrey is still one of the better managed authorities. Those indicators, however, have been criticised as giving well-heeled areas, like Surrey, an easy ride compared to deprived centres like Liverpool. Surrey has been approved as a Best Value pilot, specifically to develop a set of indicators that will measure both the level of need in each community in the county and the quality of service. Consultation will judge how effective the council is in delivering services. That in the end will be the acid test.



Surrey County Hall, in Kingston-upon-Thames, could soon be surplus to the authority's requirements

Tony Buckingham

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- Based at the Edinburgh Office, you will be responsible for a broad range of system audits and for system development audits of new IT applications.
- You will also assist with the audit needs assessment and in formulating long term and annual internal audit plans.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Ideally you will possess the MIRA (or equivalent) qualification in Internal Audit.
- Experience of systems auditing in the public or private sector.
- Good analytical skills.
- Ability to develop effective working relationships with operational and senior managers.
- Well developed drafting skills.
- Full driving licence and willingness to travel within Scotland.

For an application pack PLEASE WRITE to Monica Mitchell, 12 Hope Terrace, Edinburgh EH9 2AS, quoting the reference CH6.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is Friday 26 June 1998.

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International Investment Bank requires Legal Specialist

to provide support for the transaction execution team. Responsibilities will include providing legal advice and guidance in respect of corporate and finance issues, drafting and negotiating legal documents and liaising with internal and external lawyers. The successful candidate will possess a relevant degree, be a qualified lawyer and have a minimum 2/3 years relevant post degree experience. A knowledge of Australian law is also useful. Salary commensurate with experience. If you possess the necessary skills, please send your C.V. to PO Box B21015, Islington, London, N1 1WS

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Full product training will be given and the on-going career development of its staff is important to the company. The salary package consists of a generous basic, commission and bonus with anticipated OTE of £42,000. The company offers a flexible benefits package which includes a choice of car, pension scheme, life insurance, healthcare and a generous holiday allowance.

For further information please telephone Greg Fisher on the number below. All enquiries will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

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needed at rapidly expanding fund management company. Duties include researching and analysing companies, client liaison, developing new business and overseeing day to day operations of the business. Desired applicants should have a proven track record with segregated accounts, experience in adapting and creating fund management software, a university degree, have passed the SEA exam and substantial experience in UK equity markets.

Salary offered will be £22,000 - £30,000 per annum depending on experience.

Please send CV's to Amanda Backshall, 19 Pond Place, London SW8 6QJ

THE EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY

is creating a new post for a Financial Administrator

at the Society's central London office, to be responsible for the Society's book-keeping, banking, invoicing, subscriptions (including reclaiming tax on covenants and maintenance of the computerised membership database).

A flexible approach together with experience of book-keeping and computerised systems (mainly PC but also Macintosh) is essential. An interest in ancient Egypt is desirable but is not a requirement.

Salary: in the region of £15,000pa - depending on experience.

Please send a CV and the names and addresses of two referees by 15th June 1998 to:

The Honorary Secretary, The Egypt Exploration Society, 3 Doughty Mews, London WC1N 2PG.

International Investment Bank require Research Analyst

to provide coverage for German Institutions. Responsibilities will include analysis of US equities providing detailed investment reports to clients. Candidates should possess an MBA degree or equivalent in either finance or economics with at least three years relevant sales and analytical research experience within an International Investment Bank. An established relationship with German Financial Institutions would be desirable. Salary commensurate with experience.

CV's to PO Box 21015C Islington, London N1 1WS

Appointments also appear on page 20.

Casual investors can make it easier to take their fair share

PORTFOLIO MANAGERS provide three main useful facilities for sophisticated, hands-on equity investors who want to trade from home. First, they offer a way to track the movement of shares, handle multiple portfolios, and group shares, by market sector, for example. Second, they demonstrate the financial implications of the data, such as projected income from dividends and capital gains tax liability. Finally, they enable analysis of the yield and P/E ratios of securities in a portfolio, track shares with a view to purchase and produce see charts to show performance relative to the market index.

When comparing competing products, consider the number of portfolios each can manage, whether they offer options such as multiple-currency portfolios and whether they can handle unit trusts, FEPs, and gilts.

Having retrieved your prices, and background information such as the market indexes and financial news, the next step is to make use of that data. Some investors choose to use their spreadsheet, or a general personal finance package such as Quicken or Microsoft Money, but on the whole you will get more facilities if you choose a portfolio management package.

Some of these are tied to the data "feeds". For example, InfoTrade has its own portfolio manager, as do TenFore and MarketEye. Alternatively, a wide range of portfolio management packages will use data that has been retrieved electronically or typed in manually. The main thing to check is that your potential package supports the data source you want to use.

If you have a few shares, and are only a casual investor, then you might find the facilities offered by the personal finance manager Quicken 98 sufficient for your needs. As an adjunct to its main role of tracking personal bank, savings and loan accounts, it can keep track of one or more portfolios, treating them as an investment account. You can look up security ticker symbols on the Quicken Web site, or enter SEAO or MicroPal codes.

The prices used by Quicken are S&P Comstock 20-minute delayed, and you are limited to working with UK securities. You can watch shares that interest you, view

There are lots of portfolio management packages -

Kay Ewbank and Janet Swift

look at the choices

price histories, and performance charts. Microsoft Money 98 works in a similar way but you already need to know the ticker symbol to obtain prices from the Microsoft Investor Website. Alternatively you can maintain an online portfolio on the Investor Website, tying your online portfolio with your local portfolio.

Retrieving online prices into Money is a bit tricky - for example, even though Microsoft's Investor Website confirmed the ticker symbol for SmithKline Beecham as SBH, Money reported an unknown ticker symbol of SBH when we attempted an updated price. If you already have Microsoft Money for general personal finance, it's worth looking at its portfolio management facilities, but many investors will need something more specialised.

Fairshares is one of the more sophisticated packages, and is organised in modules, so you pay for what you get. The basic level lets you manage several portfolios, draw data from Prestel online, view some predefined charts, group your shares, set stop-loss levels, and calculate your capital gains liability (including indexation).

The basic charts and reports show you the moving average, the volume traded, Relative Strength Index (RSI), and stop-loss levels. If you want to create your own reports and graphs, analyse your data more fully, or use data from MarketEye or Teletext, then you need to buy add-on modules.

Updata is another modular package, with options for portfolio management, analytics, and viewing prices, all accessed

from Updata Data Director, which also takes care of inputting prices. You can use Prestel as the data source, showing the information in the trader module.

It can deal with multiple portfolios, and group portfolios can be made up from securities owned by more than one person. You can set stop-loss levels, manage capital gains liability, and view basic information. More sophisticated analysis is carried out in the Analytics module, where you can view moving averages, market trends, RSI and other short term indicators, and put together your own charts and reports.

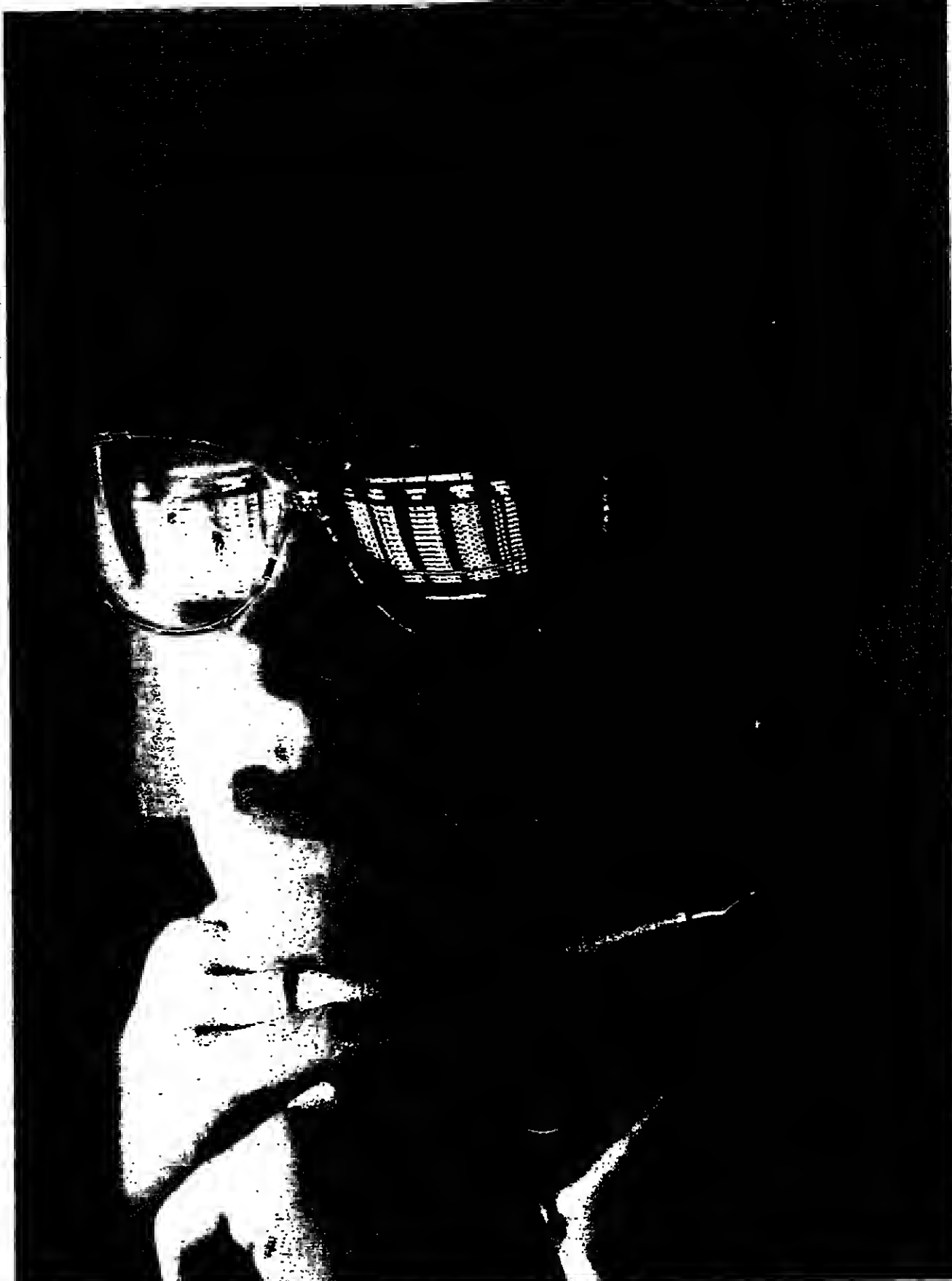
StockMarket Investor 2, by contrast, includes all its facilities in a single application. You can draw data from Prestel or Teletext, manage multiple portfolios, and create your own reports. StockMarket Investor can handle more than one currency, translating back to your base currency for a summary report.

Portfolios can group shares by sector, and you can set stop-loss alarms. Reports and charts let you see your capital gains liability including indexation, and you can view activity by date and sector. Predefined charts include prices charted against oscillators, averages, and market index.

The Analyst is a very flexible package in terms of inputting price data. You can use a Teletext receiver, get end-of-day prices from Prestel, or have Analyst's creators send you a weekly or monthly disk containing the prices. The company also provides you with historical data sets containing all the prices for at least the two past years, and up to 12 in some instances. It can manage multiple portfolios, set stop-loss alarms, and carry out extensive charting and analysis.

If you are an amateur investor with a PC, any of these packages is going to provide you with facilities that will help you take your portfolio seriously - and perhaps make serious money.

Microsoft Money '98, Microsoft, 0345 002000; Quicken '98, Intuit, 0800 585058; Fairshares, Fairshares Software Ltd, 01703 660111; Updata Trader, 0181-874 4747; StockMarket Investor 2, Meridian Software, 0181-3085960; The Analyst, WinStock Software, 01962 715557.

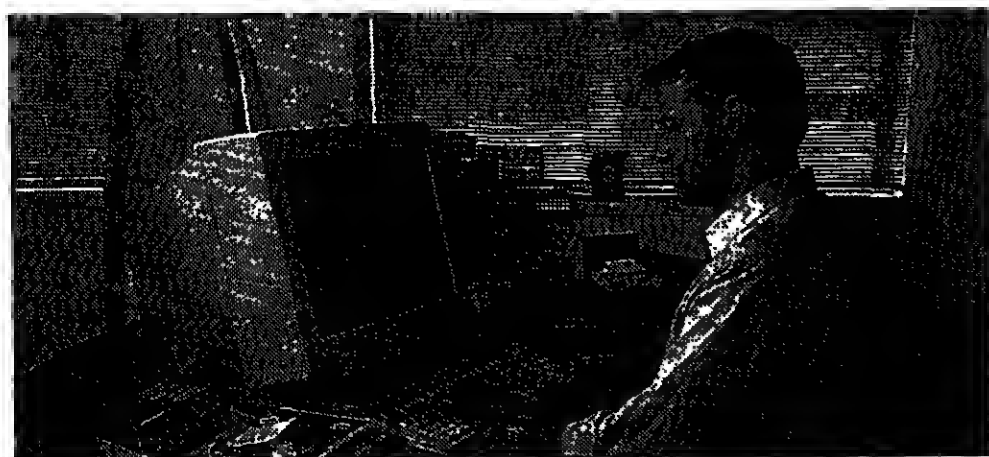


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Then a friend recommended the Personal Choice Mortgage from Bank of Scotland. Personal Choice™ is so flexible, it can adapt to the needs of the self-employed or anyone with an income that fluctuates.

Working with the figures to hand, the Mortgage Specialist at Bank of Scotland guided Chris through his application to make sure that he wasn't about to overstretch himself.

As he had a small deposit to put down, the whole process was easier than Chris had dared imagine.

The Bank satisfied itself on Chris's ability to service and repay the mortgage through various checks.

Chris was equally impressed that as well as being flexible at the outset, Personal Choice also offers freedom when it comes to repayments.

You can opt to pay more each month or less when you need to. You can even choose to take a payment holiday of up to six months or, alternatively, pay over 10 months, instead of 12 each year*. This gives you the chance to keep a better

control over your finances at difficult times of the year such as when you splash out for your holidays.

Another innovative feature of Personal Choice is the opportunity to combine your savings with your mortgage. This makes perfect sense when you consider the rate you pay on your mortgage is likely to be higher than the interest you ever received in a savings account.

Not only does it mean you can reduce the interest you pay monthly, but if you wish, you can even pay off


your mortgage earlier. And yet you still have easy access to those savings the moment you need them.

You are even given a cheque book* so you can borrow up to an extra 5% of the value of the property should you ever require to make an unexpected purchase.

Provisional acceptance of your application for a Personal Choice Mortgage can be given over the phone 7 days a week and between 8am and 10pm. It sounds easy, and that's because it is. As far as our software designer friend, Chris Hay, is concerned, the mortgage couldn't have been designed any better if he'd done it himself.

- Free remortgage package to cover solicitor's and valuation fees**.
- Use the cheque book for access to overpayments or borrow up to an extra 5% of the value of the property.
- Pay more or less depending on your circumstances*.
- Enjoy a more flexible mortgage with payment holidays of up to six months.
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YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

هنا من الأصل

Healthy move: plan to be ill

What's the best form of income protection to have in the event of long-term sickness?

By Andrew Couchman

IF YOU were to become seriously ill and could not work for some months, maybe years, which would be of most use to you, a regular monthly income or a cash lump sum?

It is a question that is impossible to answer. The lump sum may help you adapt to any new way of life, but you would still need an income to survive on. On the other hand, the income without the lump sum would mean you would receive no capital to buy the things you might need, and the chances of borrowing money would be bleak if you were not able to work.

But when it comes to protection insurance, all too often insurers ask you to make just such a choice. They can offer you income protection, sometimes also called permanent health insurance or PHI, and this will pay a monthly income if you cannot work because of illness or disability. You can usually have up to 50 to 60 per cent of your income insured and the insurer will pay out after you have been ill for between three and twelve months (the shorter the time the more expensive the cover, generally) until you return to work, die or retire.

If you would prefer a lump sum, a critical illness policy would give you exactly that on diagnosis of one of perhaps 30 or more critical illnesses. It would pay if you had a heart attack, stroke or cancer, for example, even if you went back to work fairly quickly.

Income protection is the elder product, having first seen the light of day over 100 years ago, since when it has changed little. Generally, white-collar workers pay least while people in some occupations such as miners will not be able to get cover at all.

Many employers have their own schemes and Mike Turner, product manager protection at the insurer Friends Provident recommends asking your employer:

■ Is there a company income protection or PHI scheme in place?
■ Am I a member and if not how can I join?

■ After how many weeks or months of illness will it pay out and for how long?

■ How much would I get?
■ Will it go up as salaries rise?

■ If I leave can I take the cover with me (this is known as a continuation option)?

It may be possible to top up any existing company cover or to have



If the unthinkable happens, you need to be sure that your finances are not going to take a turn for the worse, too

your own independent cover, but that will not entitle you to double benefits - and it pays to take professional financial advice before you make any decision.

The Office of Fair Trading, in a recent critical report, pointed out that many people are over-insured, only finding out when they become ill that the full plan benefits will not be paid.

This is because they exceed the insurer's arbitrary limit of 50-60 per cent of your pre-disability income, plus any State benefits. This particularly affects the self-employed who pay their accountant to minimise their taxable income and then find that that is the figure their insurer will base its maximum benefit on.

Some insurers have a reputation for being particularly harsh when it comes to paying out yet, ironically, insurers' tests of disability are now

more generous than the tests applied by the Department of Social Security for Incapacity Benefit.

Most insurers will pay a straightforward claim quickly and without fuss but problems can arise if the condition is difficult to prove - stress or a bad back for example. If you do have to claim, tell the insurer as soon as possible, be open and honest with them and expect to have periodic medical check-ups.

Claims are much simpler on critical illness policies. There is usually no maximum benefit other than the insurer's overall limit and payment depends on proof of having the condition, not of being unable to work.

Ted Yeates, an independent financial adviser at Cheltenham-based Warwick Butchart Associates, recommends critical illness cover for mortgages, adding as much as you

can afford on top of that.

Cover of four times your income or more is not unheard of, but make sure that you can comfortably afford the cover. Most people settle on two to three times their income.

Mike Turner says that many people choose to add the cover to their mortgage endowment policy and this can be the cheapest way of buying it. It only makes sense though if you really want a mortgage endowment in the first place.

Suffering a serious illness is more likely to happen when you are older rather than when you are younger. Even so, a man of working age is 20 times more likely to be off work ill for more than six months than he is to die before age 65, according to Permanent Insurance. At the age of 30 he has almost a one in three chance of suffering a heart attack, cancer or stroke before age 65. By

comparison, for a woman of the same age the risk is almost one in five.

Critical illness and income protection are, according to Ted Yeates, complementary rather than competing, but things would certainly be easier if insurers offered a single product to fully meet both the need for income and a lump sum.

In the meantime, if you have life assurance cover - and one out of three of us do - then it may make sense to look at serious illness cover too in order to get both a lump sum and an income.

Warwick Butchart Associates on 01242 584144; Permanent Insurance on 01392 445555; Friends Provident on 01306 740123. Andy Couchman is publishing editor of 'HealthCare Insurance Report'.

Free money: hail the liberation

You no longer have to lock up your deposits for months if you want a top rate of interest. By Tony Lyons

WHEN IT comes to looking after your cash, competition has never been fiercer as instant-access, postal and telephone accounts proliferate.

The move by the Office of Fair Trading to investigate the changes in interest paid on some fixed-term savings products, prompted by the recent action of Northern Rock, is making financial institutions rethink how they treat their customers. The risk of them arbitrarily changing rates without notification and not indicating which accounts will pay the highest rates is now diminishing.

In addition, a new breed of deposit takers such as the supermarket chains can be added to the list of traditional homes for your money.

Next April the new Individual Savings Account, which will replace PEPs and Tessas, is being introduced. In the first year, we will be able to hold up to £2,000 in cash in the new tax-free medium.

After April 2000, we will only be able to put a maximum of £1,000 a year into an Isa deposit account. But already some of the savings institutions such as the Halifax and Yorkshire building societies are beginning to open what look like Isa-type accounts that pay good rates of interest on low balances.

We all need some rainy day money that we can easily lay our hands on. When it comes to looking after your cash, it used to be the case that if you were prepared to give one-, two- or three-months' notice before making withdrawals then you could expect a better rate of interest.

This remains true to some extent. If you look at everyday bank and building society instant access accounts, most will pay between 3.25 and 4 per cent for holdings of under £1,000, slightly more for larger amounts. But you can walk into any branch to make deposits and withdrawals.

However when you have to give 30 days' warning of a withdrawal, you can expect to earn 6.95 per cent with Bradford & Bingley or 6.75 per cent with the Royal Bank of Scotland, two of the best rates

for £1,000 from the larger institutions. Some smaller deposit takers will pay up to 7.6 per cent.

But today, it hardly seems worthwhile having to give notice of any withdrawals as there are now a number of the best rates of interest. One of the best comes from Safeway, the supermarket group. It operates a postal direct savings account which will accept balances from £50 and pays interest of 7.3 per cent on deposits of more than £1,000.

Only just behind is Cheltenham & Gloucester's instant transfer telephone-operated account, which pays 7.25 per cent. Scottish Widows Bank's postal account, which pays 7 per cent, and Standard Life Bank's instant telephone account, which pays 6.9 per cent. Most first-time Tessa's are paying more than 6.5 per cent tax free, although Norwich & Peterborough and Bradford & Bingley building societies will pay 8 per cent for deposits of more than £100 and £500 respectively. All of these will vary with interest rates.

If you want a fixed rate of interest you will usually have to hand over £5,000 for at least one year. A number of building societies and banks will pay you between 7 and 7.5 per cent for one year and anything up to 7 per cent for five years on their fixed rate bonds. Basic-rate taxpayers could also look at guaranteed income bonds. Longer-term investments attract a lower rate of interest - you could expect a touch more than 5 per cent for five years.

At weekends, *The Independent* and *The Sunday* publish tables showing the best savings rates.

Bradford & Bingley, 0800 592588; Norwich & Peterborough, 01733 372222; Royal Bank of Scotland, 0800 880880; Safeway, 0800 995995; Standard Life Bank, 0345 555557; Scottish Widows Bank, 0845 845 0829; Cheltenham & Gloucester, 0800 742437; Pinnacle, 0181-207 9007; GE Financial Insurance, 0151-380 3388.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained

If you want to your savings to make you richer, you have to be prepared to take risks. By Rachel Fixsen

DO YOU want to gamble with your life savings? Probably not. But while an outright bet may not be called for, taking certain risks with your money is necessary if you want to get a good return.

Deciding how you feel about risk is a key step before committing hard-earned savings to any investment product. One of the lowest risk investments you can make is putting your money into a building society - deposit account or National Savings products. But does it pay to do so?

Your return, after tax, on £1,000 over the last 10 years would have been £1,802.04 in an average building society ac-

count, according to the Building Societies Association. If you had been more daring and bought stocks, you could have made far more. If it had mirrored the FTSE-100 index of leading shares, the same investment would now be worth £3,245, not including tax or dividends.

Between shares and building society deposits on the risk spectrum lies a wide range of investment vehicles. Government bonds or Gilts give you a fixed return and safeguard your capital, while some life in-

surance company products such as endowment policies and with-profit bonds keep your capital safe, but your return is subject to market conditions. With guaranteed equity products, such as protected unit trusts, you have no assurances about the level your income will be but most of your capital is safe.

Investing in shares, or equities, is risky compared to keeping your money in a deposit account, because share values fluctuate from day to day according to worldwide market conditions. Anything from an oil discovery in Asia to higher German unemployment can affect the value of UK stocks.

Putting your money in the shares of just one company can be very risky indeed. After all, the firm could go bust at any time and leave you with nothing. But you can spread your risk with collective stock market investments, such as unit trusts, investment trusts or pension funds. These will allow you to own part of a fund which in turn holds shares in perhaps a hundred different companies. Risk levels vary between funds. Your capital is safer in a fund which only holds shares of major UK companies than in one investing in small eastern European companies.

"A key message is equities are good in the long-term, but people are very wary of equities because of the risk,"

says Jim Preston, of Wesleyan Financial Services. "The length of time you invest reduces the risk," he says.

Any stock market investment should be held for at least five years, experts advise. In the last 25 years, there have been no five-year periods in which the stock market has shown an overall negative return, according to figures from Principal Investment Management.

Emergency funds should not be in shares, but money you do not plan to use for at least 10 years could be. Your pension savings, unless you are close to retirement, might be invested in shares, and other long-term savings you make for retirement could be.

Roddy Kohn, of Bristol-based independent financial advisers Kohn Cougar, says he uses an investment risk scale of nought to 10. Building society accounts are at the lower end, managed funds with a mix of assets including property, cash and equities are in the middle, and funds investing in the economies of Russia and emerging markets are rated 10. He encourages younger clients, in their 30s, to be risk-rated at six or eight.

"Where you've got 10 years or more to invest, you ought to be more aggressive," he says. "The less money you have the more aggressive you have to be in getting that money to grow," he adds.

It is vital to review your in-

vestments constantly, Mr Kohn says. For instance, if regular savings into a fairly risky investment have made good gains, you could switch part of it into a lower risk fund to safeguard your gains. "You may conclude you don't need to make any changes, but you will still need to make reviews," he says.

As you approach retirement, you are more likely to have substantial financial assets. At that point most advisers would tell you to invest more cautiously, possibly using Gilts or other fixed-income securities. Any downturn in the stock market would be magnified by the size of your assets, and also there would also be less time for a temporary slump in share prices to be ironed out by a subsequent upturn. And with only a few working years left, you would be hard pushed to replace any lost savings.

Judging just how risky a specific investment might be is a tricky art, and often best left to the professionals. A good independent financial adviser can help.

The Independent has published a free guide, *Making Your Investments Work for You*. The guide, which covers every aspect of financial planning, including paying off a mortgage, retirement and investment is sponsored by Wesleyan Financial Services. To obtain your copy, call 0800 1379749 or fill in the coupon on this page.

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Reforms to the leasehold system should put a stop to 'institutionalised racketeering'. By Karen Woolfson

Lousy landlords have it coming

LEASEHOLDERS REPRESENTING people all over Britain who have been abused by nightmare landlords are this week meeting with the parliamentary group of 55 MPs who are examining the issue of leasehold reform.

The meeting comes just as Hilary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, has told Barry Gardiner, MP for Brent North and chairman of the group, that her department is sending out a consultation document which proposes that all leaseholders with cases in the county courts be allowed to transfer to leasehold valuation tribunals, where costs cannot be awarded against tenants. The new measures are expected to come into force in August.

Four leaders of leasehold organisations will present case studies to the parliamentary group and call for the abolition of the present system in favour of commonholds. In which the leaseholder owns the freehold of the property on which a flat stands. They will also call for the right of all leaseholders to choose their own managing agents and for the latter to be governed by tight regulations.

The flatowners attending the meeting will include Stella Evans, head of the Coalition for the Abolition of Residential Leaseholders (CARL); the head of Freedom from Leasehold Abuse (FREELA); Paul Pritchard who runs the Freshwater Leasehold Alliance (FLA); and Ken Murray, chairman of a residents association representing hundreds of flatowners in Kent which is also part of the FLA.

Among the MPs in the parliamentary group are secretary Adrian Sanders, vice-chairs Edward Davy and Jan Fitzpatrick, treasurer Peter Bottomley, Jacqui Lail, Brian Iddon, Karen Buck.

Mr Murray says: "We're middle-class, we're law abiding and we've kept quiet for a long time. There is so much anger because we are dealing with people who wouldn't last five minutes in the free market."

His residents' association has refused to pay the estimated £144,000 levied by the managing agents for building works, after receiving an estimate from a local contractor which suggests it would cost less than half that amount.

Mr Murray adds: "The current leasehold system is institutionalised racketeering. It's an open invitation for people to help themselves to



As flatowners wait for a commonhold system, giving them the freehold of the property on which their flat stands, a number of changes could be introduced.

money. We're denied our right to seek services as we see fit and to pay for them as we see fit."

Nick Raynsford, Minister for London and Construction, who addressed the parliamentary group at the last meeting, has a good understanding of leasehold problems and is assisting Hilary Armstrong to look at ways of overhauling the current leasehold system.

He told MPs that the Government is already considering whether there should be some form of control over managing agents.

Mr Raynsford added: "Standards of service can be unacceptably poor

There are strong arguments for measures to ensure managing agents are competent and honest."

He is particularly concerned that managing agents who appear to be in a unique position of having the opportunity to hold substantial sums of other people's money without any requirement for bonding or insurance. His concern applies equally to landlords who manage their properties directly.

A leaseholder who does not wish his name to be used, points out that it is not only managing agents who need to be tightly regulated, but the accountancy profession which is

responsible for producing service charge accounts. He claims: "Self-regulation is not working. I want to see a fully independent system of regulation for accountants like the Financial Services Act, which has teeth. Perhaps supervision of accountants could be brought under the wing of the FSA."

The same leaseholder says a number of accountants have been reported to the Institute of Chartered Accountants on issues relating to service charges and the ICA's investigation committee is now examining the matter. The main complaints are about accountants who

fail to fulfil legal obligations relating to Sections 21 and 22 of the Landlords and Tenants Act 1985.

These require landlords to produce a summary of the service charge accounts, supported by sufficient information, plus the right for leaseholders to view the original service charge accounts plus supporting documents including invoices, receipts, bank statements and cheque stubs.

Mr Raynsford believes: "The balance of control between landlords and leaseholders is unfair and, in most cases, bears no relation to the respective shares of the equity in a

building." This has resulted in a variety of problems due to the significant number of landlords "whose management styles range from the incompetent to the criminal," overshadowing well-respected landlords.

He highlights the more unscrupulous landlord who charges for work that has not been done, or undertakes works that are unnecessary. "Others pocket substantial commission for insurance, with the leaseholders left to pay the bill. Others demand extortionate fees for allowing minor alterations. Then there are the out-and-out criminals who misappropriate service charges

and sinking funds. All of these practices cause misery and anxiety to countless leaseholders."

Mr Raynsford says the Government's overall objective is to provide leaseholders with the opportunity to reap the full benefits of owner occupation and to have control over the way in which their homes are managed.

Leaseholders addressing the all-party group this week will also raise the issue of the problems that have arisen under the current system of collective enfranchisement. This is when a group of leaseholders purchase the freehold together but in many cases some of them get together, take control and bully the rest.

To avoid this – and as flatowners wait for a commonhold system to be introduced, giving flatowners the freehold of the property on which their flat stands – a number of interim changes could be introduced.

These include a legal requirement that every collective enfranchised block of 10 or less flats give each leaseholder the right to automatically become a director; for original service charge accounts and all supporting documentation to be made available for each leaseholder to examine or to arrange for an expert to scrutinise every financial year by giving 21 days' notice.

Campaigners say they are encouraged by the Government's determination to make it easier for leaseholders to question rogue landlords without paying out huge sums of money.

Plans to allow all leaseholders with cases in the county courts to transfer them to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal, which does not award costs against tenants, is just a taste of the radical changes to come.

At the moment, service charge proceedings that were underway before 1 September 1997, when LVTs came into existence, cannot be transferred. This means many tenants are not benefiting from the new regulations.

Karen Woolfson welcomes comments for her column. Write to: Homebattles, c/o Nic Cicuttii, Personal Finance section, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Karen regrets she is unable to reply personally to all letters.

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AMANDA DAVIDSON

NIGEL CAME to see me the other day to ask for some investment advice. He is 66 and retired, with a good occupational pension scheme that increases in line with the retail price index each and every year. He has additional income from the state and another pension which means that his income is sufficient for his requirements.

He has no mortgage on his property and about £75,000 to invest, all of which is in cash. This investment leaves him sufficient cash in building societies and a Tessa for short-term needs and emergencies. The £75,000 he can comfortably tie up for a five-year-plus period.

He has never invested in the stock market before. Nigel has some privatisation shares, but that is all. However, he feels that it is time that he looked at diversifying his investments.

Nigel is not pleased with the interest rate he is getting on his building society money, but is cautious about stock market investment. He needs advice on how to maximise his capital for capital growth without taking

extraordinary risks, but still giving the money a chance to grow. He might need some income in the future, or chunks of capital.

As this is Nigel's first foray into the investment field, it is most important that the investments should be spread and different companies used where their products are competitive.

Our solution was to advise Nigel on a spread of investments that would provide him with a good chance of capital growth and from which he could take income without problem if his circumstances were to change in the future.

As Nigel has no personal equity plans (PEPs) at all this was a first consideration. We did not want to take high risks so we recommended a corporate bond PEP.

The recommendation for his investments was as follows:

Scottish Mutual offshore bond – £15,000
Prudential with-profits bond – £20,000
M&G PEP – £5,000
Series of Unit Trnsts – £34,000
Total – £75,000

Nigel is a borderline higher-rate taxpayer and the income that he had been receiving from his deposit accounts was tipping him over into a higher-rate tax bracket.

Therefore a PEP was a first consideration, as any income he would take from this and indeed any capital, would be tax-free. A corporate bond PEP limits the risk: exposure, although

there is a degree of risk with this type of investment. In spite of being a "low risk" PEP the importance of good management is as important as with higher-risk PEPs. Performance can vary dramatically, so this was taken into consideration.

The offshore bond sounds a little exotic, but in reality this type of investment is a legitimate choice. From a risk exposure point of view, the Scottish Mutual Safety Plus fund carries a quarterly underpinning, whereby only a portion of the investment is exposed to risk and the potential upside is not over-sacrificed for this type of security.

The advantage of the offshore bond is that Nigel can choose exactly when he brings money into this country, such as when his tax rate is at the basic rate rather than at 40 per cent. This puts Nigel in control of the tax he pays.

A with-profits bond is a cautious type of investment where bonuses would only be at risk if Nigel were to encash the investment at a time when conditions were adverse. What is important is to choose a good provider, such as Prudential, which has demonstrated a good track record and the ability to continue to declare reasonable bonuses. Basic-rate taxpayers pay no tax on encashment (providing the gain does not tip them over the higher-rate threshold).

Higher-rate taxpayers benefit from being able to take 5 per cent withdrawals for a 20-year period on which they pay no tax. As part of Nigel's income does not in-

crease, it is likely that in the future he will be comfortably out of higher-rate tax.

A series of unit trusts was spread between various companies such as Fidelity, Perpetual and Gartmore and was also spread geographically using the companies concerned in areas where they are competitive.

This was the most risky part of Nigel's portfolio. Some of the investments were in trackers and others in actively managed funds, again to give a further spread. By restricting investments to the UK only, Nigel would lose out on any growth worldwide.

The unit trusts also meant that Nigel could use his capital gains tax allowance of £6,800, which up until now he has not been using.

Thus we have created for Nigel a tax-efficient portfolio without overly risking his investments. Should one area of investment let him down, he has sufficient other investments to be able to weather the storms.

Should Nigel's circumstances change in the future, he would be able to take a regular income from many of the investments that we have advised. In addition, the investments are completely liquid in the event that he wished to realise them, although we would recommend for any of these types of investments a five-year view, which accorded with Nigel's wishes.

Amanda Davidson is a partner at Holden Meehan, independent financial advisers (0171 6921700).

ty if the man in the green shirt touched the ball". "But it hit the bar and bounced in. Surely he doesn't get a whole point for that?" and "So the ones in the striped shorts are the goodies?" until your colleagues are driven back to their desks.

2) Memorize catchlines employed by those watching games. Wait until every one is working quietly, then take turns to leap up your feet and shout "Go on, my son!". "What a goal!" and "Yes, Yes! YESSSS!" and "Good guarantee, if nothing else, a few coffee turns."

3) Remember: TV companies all the schedule holes during World Cup with excellent black-and-white movies. Time the amount of time the football is on each day and insist on parity for Bette Davis. Then gather round the screen giving "He's given her a mink. I bet she shoots him in the last reel."

4) Use that stopwatch again. Record the amount of time football watchers waste standing, coffee-holding arms crossed over their belly, other hand jiggling coins in their pocket, in front of the screen/gathered round the radio. Divide this time by the number of non-football watchers. All non-participants should then add this amount of time to their lunch hour. With any luck, you'll be out "til four for the rest of the month."

5) Whenever footie comes on, all female employees to get out nail varnish, face packs, hair glop etc and gather in a large group to discuss, use and spray around. If they can ruthlessly manipulate a gender stereotype, then so can you.

6) If all else fails (and because of the risk to life both from electrocution and subsequent violence, this is an extreme measure), give a very generous drink of water to that poor irradiated not plant

My children just don't speak the same language

Nicky Maitlis and her husband want their children to be bilingual. It can be a slog at times, but it's worth it

WHILE OTHER couples relax with a newspaper at the end of the day, you will find me hunched over my sons' tape recorder, swotting up the words to yet another verse of "Le Bon Roi Dagobert", so I can sing along in French. Is this song really about a king who puts his underpants on backwards? I fast-forward the tape, which uncannily stops at "J'ai du bon tabac" - only a Gauloise-puffing nation could possibly incorporate smoking into a children's nursery rhyme. My husband Paul is from a French-speaking family and we are trying to bring up our children, Simon, 21 months, and Daniel, five months, to be bilingual.

Paul thought I was mad when I enrolled Simon in the Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle, the only French state school in London, four months before he was even born. Strangely enough, I'm the one who is completely obsessed with making sure the children learn French. Paul takes his bilingualism for granted because speaking French comes so naturally to him. But I slogged my way through a degree in Modern Languages so I know what it's like to have to work hard in order to speak a language fluently. I'm thrilled at the thought of my kids effortlessly absorbing French. I'm determined not to let them miss out on this opportunity, especially as my own bilingual father did not bring us up speaking German.

Cohn Baker, Professor of Education at the University of Wales, Bangor, and author of *A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism* (Multilingual Matters, £9.95) believes parents should adopt a structured approach when raising children bilingually. "They should discuss which languages they intend to speak to their children before they have them - a sort of 'language family planning'."

So Paul and I started by following the "one-parent-one-language" system, where each parent speaks to the children in a different lan-



Children at the Lycée Charles de Gaulle in London. "Pupils from bilingual families do not get confused," says the head

Andrew Buurman

guage and sticks to it (Paul in French and I in English). But since the boys spend most of their time with me, if Paul is home late or abroad, there are days when they don't hear any French at all. So, going against all advice, I began to sing and read to Simon and Daniel in French.

On a day trip to Paris, I dashed

out halfway through a sumptuous family lunch in search of children's books, CDs and cassettes of nursery rhymes. I played these so often that after a couple of months I had learned more than 100 songs off by heart.

Thanks to one verse of the song "Cadet Rousselet", my vocabulary of the construction industry is good -

heams (poutres) and rafters (chevrons) - which could prove useful if we ever buy a house in France. Friends are astonished when I pass up the opportunity to watch *Grosse Pointe Blank* on video as I am currently glued to *Le Manège Enchanté* (The Magic Roundabout) in the original black and white French version. Paul says he's never known

my French so fluent, but what about Simon and Daniel?

I am consoling myself with the knowledge that bilingual children often speak late, though I was secretly delighted when, at 18 months, Simon said his first word, "gris" (grey). "Where on earth could he have picked up such a useless word?" asked my mother. Only I

knew my French nursery rhyme brain-washing technique was working.

Like many bilingual families, we're finding it's a continual struggle making sure the children really get the chance to practise their second language. Dr Gideon Lack, Consultant in Paediatric Allergies at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington,

who is in the enviable position of being trilingual (English, French and Hebrew) sends his bilingual sons to a summer camp in Switzerland where only French is spoken. "In England, they are less keen to speak French because none of their friends do and they are the odd ones out."

I sometimes worry whether Simon and Daniel will simply end up dazed and confused, speaking neither language properly. After all, how can Simon possibly distinguish between his French nickname "chou chou" (poppet) and the English word "shoe" which sounds similar? But at the Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle in London, the headmaster, Jean-Michel Fruchet, is encouraging. "Many of our pupils are from bilingual families and we find they do not get confused; they seem to be able to differentiate between whom they are talking to and in which language."

Marjula Grover set up the *Bilingual Family Newsletter* 15 years ago because she wanted to discover more about bilingualism when she was raising her own children to speak Finnish and English. "The newsletter gives parents a chance to share their questions and concerns about bringing up their children in multi-lingual environments. Our subscribers are from all over the world and though the languages may be different, the worries are often the same."

As I read *Le Petit Ours Brun* for the sixth time before putting Simon to bed, I fantasise how, if I had put as much effort into boning up on Samuel Beckett and Sartre at Cambridge as I do in reading Simon's French stories, I might even have got a First...

Readers can receive a free copy of the *Bilingual Family Newsletter* before subscribing. Write to: *Multilingual Matters*, Frankfort Lodge, Clevedon Hall, Victoria Road, Clevedon, SS21 7TH. Enclose £1 p.p. cheque to *Multilingual Matters Ltd*.

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SPICE UP YOUR WORKING LIFE!

The London Career Day once again makes a welcome return on June 24th where you can give your career a summer makeover. Now established as London's premier job exhibition, the London Career Days offer the capital's workforce access to the best recruitment experts who are on hand to inform, advise and guide you into the various job options available in the job market today. On Wednesday June 24th you can talk to the people who have their finger on the pulse of the very latest job opportunities in London permanent or temporary positions, visit to see what your talents can earn you or what some specific career answers, then the London Career Day is for you.

As well as constructive advice there are hundreds of London's latest job opportunities, some of which are never advertised. As well as that there are numerous competitions to enter, free prize draws and numerous giveaways as well as plenty of free drinks and nibbles throughout the day.

This particular show will be of special interest to first and second jobbers with both magazines offering advice and guidance via their career supplement for college leavers, as well as free copies of our 100 page London Career Guide - the definite guide to choosing your career and how to get that important start.

So pop along and spend a couple of hours at the London Career Day where you will find the perfect start to spice up your working life this summer.

• Wednesday 24th June 1998 • New Convention Rooms, Great Queen Street, London WC2E 7LJ (2 minutes from Holborn and Covent Garden tubes) • Open 9am - 7pm • Refreshments available • Admission Free

هكذا من الأصل

NEW FILMS

NOWHERE (18)

Director: Gregg Araki
Starring: James Duval, Rachel True, Nathan Bexton, Shannon Doherty
One-man film factory Gregg Araki returns to the nihilistic landscape of *Totally F***ed Up* with another hallucinatory journey through an LA underground inhabited by young bisexual drifters, sadomasochists, druggies, airheads - and, this time around, a few aliens for good measure. It's good to see the elegantly wasted James Duval, as alienated teen Dark Smith, returning to his low-budget roots with Araki after a starring role in *Independence Day*. Intoxicating stuff.

RED CORNER (15)

Director: Jon Avnet
Starring: Richard Gere, Bai Ling, Bradley Whitford
Richard Gere usually exercises a bit of discrimination when choosing his projects, but his very public pro-Tibet stance must have blinded him to the failings of this clunking piece of anti-Chinese propaganda. In Beijing to sell trashy American TV programmes to a Chinese network, Gere finds himself framed for murder and railroaded by the brutal legal system. But the insights *Red Corner* offers into the Chinese brand of totalitarianism are swamped by the clichéd depiction of ruthless party cadres (they practically say "We have ways of making you talk") and repetitive courtroom scenes, which mostly revolve around the issue of whether Gere can hear the simultaneous translation of proceedings through his headset.

DAD SAVAGE (18)

Director: Betsy Morris Evans
Starring: Patrick Stewart, Kevin McKidd, Helen McCrory, Joe McFadden, Marc Warren
Patrick Stewart sheds his *Star Trek* image to play Dad Savage, a hippy-growing, Country & Western-obsessed East Anglian crime boss who turns very nasty indeed when two of his employees try to run off with his life savings. Strikingly shot in the bleak expanses of the Lincolnshire fens by first-time director Betsy

Morris Evans, this is an original stab at re-inventing the British thriller. There are strong performances, but a *Unus Suspectus*-inspired structure of flashbacks within flashbacks conspires to make a raw, brutal little story frustratingly hard to follow.

THE TASTE OF CHERRY (PG)

Director: Abbas Kiarostami
Starring: Homayon Ershadi, Adolphossein Bagheri, Afshin Bakhtiari
The joint winner of last year's *Palme d'Or* has taken a year to get a release over here, and it's not hard to see why. In precise - an Iranian man drives around the outskirts of Tehran looking for someone to help him commit suicide - it sounds like the average multiplex-goes-to-nightmare of an art movie. But thanks to naturalistic performances and director Abbas Kiarostami's pure shooting style, it's hypnotic and moving.

THE WEDDING SINGER (12)

Director: Frank Coraci
Starring: Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore
A shamelessly dumb but very winning comedy about a hopelessly romantic wedding singer who falls in love with a waitress (Drew Barrymore), only to find that she's engaged to someone else. The 1985 setting allows for wonderfully grotesque fashions and a stream of terrible songs and retro in-jokes. And where else could you see Steve Buscemi singing Spandau Ballet?

HURRICANE STREETS (15)

Director: Morgan J Freeman
Starring: Brendan Sexton III, Shawn Elliott
Brendan Sexton III, who made an impression as the high-school bully in *Welcome to the Dollhouse*, is touchingly awkward as Marcus, a 15-year-old New Yorker, whose criminal lifestyle is offset by an almost saintly care for the no-hopers in his gang. But despite raw performances from the young unknowns, and a sheaf of awards from the Sundance Film Festival - the film never steers sufficiently clear from the usual kids and crime clichés.

John Wrathall

GENERAL RELEASE

AFTERGLOW (15)

Two couples - flysomethings Nick Nolte and Julie Christie, and twentysomethings Lara Flynn Boyle and Jonny Lee Miller - swap partners and wry aphorisms in the latest arthouse romantic comedy from writer-director Alan Rudolph.

ANASTASIA (U)

In this new animated feature, all geographical identity has been jettisoned along with historical accuracy - and, for that matter, sanity, logic and good taste. *Anastasia* is as bullying and unruly as Disney animation at its worst.

AS GOOD AS IT GETS (15)

Jack Nicholson and Helen Hunt are thrown together in a film which benefits from the sparkiness of James L Brooks' writing and the cracking energy of the cast.

THE BIG LEBOWSKI (18)

"Dude" Lebowski (Jeff Bridges) is a long-haired relic from the 1970s who spends his days burning around Los Angeles getting stoned and going bowling with his buddies. But there's another Lebowski in the vicinity and a case of mistaken identity sparks off one of the most strung-out mysteries ever.

BLUES BROTHERS 2000 (PG)

Eighteen years after the release of the startlingly unfunny *The Blues Brothers*, John Landis and his co-writer Dan Aykroyd have contrived to resurrect the story of Elwood Blues (Aykroyd) who, after the death of his brother, re-emerges from prison and decides to put the old band back together. The film is certainly all-out stupid, but it is also rather endearing.

THE BUTCHER BOY (15)

Neil Jordan's film of Patrick McCabe's blackly comic novel about a manic, precocious 12-year-old in 1960s Ireland has a macabre thrill about it that is genuinely seductive. Jordan's depiction of the world as seen through the deranged eyes of young Francie (the astounding Eamon Owens) is so rich and unsparring that it pulls you into the movie in the manner of a Grimm fairytale.

DARK CITY (15)

Alex Proyas, director of *The Crow*, returns with another over-the-top urban nightmare. Anomalous suspected serial killer Rufus Sewell is pursued by four inspector William Hurt. Spryge-wedding psychiatrist Kiefer Sutherland and Richard O'Brien as one of a sinister breed of aliens known as "The Strangers".

DECONSTRUCTING HARRY (18)

Woody Allen's most honest and intelligent film in more than a decade.

DEEP IMPACT (12)

A meteor the size of New York is on a collision course with the Earth unless superstar astronaut Robert Duval and his team can intercept it. Ropy characterisation and the complete absence of wit or energy are only the worst things about this heavy-handed disaster movie.

FISTS IN THE POCKET (NC)

A new print of Marco Bellocchio's 1965 classic.

THE GENERAL (15)

John Boorman's best film in two decades charts the career of Dublin gangster Martin Cahill, who ran rings round the Garda with a series of heists before the IRA put him out of business in 1994.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS (15)

Dickens update with Ethan Hawke.

THE HANGING GARDEN (15)

Gay hero, Sweet William, returns home for the wedding of his sister (Kerry Fox), who is marrying the boy that William once had a crush on, in this disarming drama.

HAPPY TOGETHER (15)

Giddy tour of modern urban life, structured around the violently unpredictable romance

between two men who arrive in Argentina from Hong Kong, and fall into a cycle of breaking up and making up.

JACKIE BROWN (15)

In *Jackie Brown*, the eponymous flight attendant (Pam Grier) and mobster Orville (Samuel L Jackson) whom she's moonlighting for take centre stage. But the movie's main focus is the desperation of each of its characters to make something of their lives before it's too late. A new direction for director Tarantino, which may appeal to an audience he previously alienated.

LIVE FLESH (18)

A novel by Ruth Rendell is the unlikely origin of Pedro Almodóvar's most accomplished film to date, though the action has been shifted to Madrid and crammed with sexual symbolism so potent it leaves you reeling.

LOLITA (18)

Adrian Lyne's remake of Kubrick's stylish Nabokov adaptation lacks spirit and adventure.

LOVE ETC (15)

The meandering French drama stars Charlotte Gainsbourg as a woman torn between her husband and his best friend.

THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS (U)
A welcome re-release for Orson Wells' 1942 masterpiece about a wealthy family whose conflicting emotions tear them apart.

MARTHA - MEET FRANK, DANIEL & LAURENCE (15)
This intermittently engaging romantic comedy sees Martha, an American visiting London on a whim, going on separate dates with three men who turn out to be best friends.

MY SON THE FANATIC (15)

My Son The Fanatic establishes an opposition between an agreeable, progressive Pakistani taxi driver and his son, who has his sights set on becoming a fundamentalist Muslim.

ONCE UPON A TIME... WHEN WE WERE COLORED (NC)
Nostalgic look back to life in 1940s Mississippi

THE REAL BLONDE (15)

Tom Dillio's prickly satire on the fashion industry doesn't have enough original or incidental ideas to go around, but it is charmingly played by a game cast, and littered with surprises and funny one-liners.

SLIDING DOORS (15)

Sliding Doors is a romantic comedy set in the space-time continuum, sending its heroine, Gwyneth Paltrow, off into two separate realities at the same time, with two different suitors (John Hannah and John Lynch). Just what the world needed: a humorous reinterpretation of Kieslowski's *Blind Chance*.

STAR KID (PG)

Amiable children's adventure about a young boy (Joseph Mazzello from *Jurassic Park*) who's called upon to save the universe. What it lacks in budget, it makes up for in imagination.

TISSIE (12)

Rose (Kate Winslet) is about to marry into obscene wealth, but has deserted her fiancé at the last minute for Jack (Leonardo DiCaprio), a rags-to-riches man from the wrong side of the tracks.

LES VOLEURS (18)

Intriguing and complex French thriller with the fine Daniel Auteuil as a seedy cop who becomes involved with a case implicating a teacher (Catherine Deneuve) and her lover.

WASHINGTON SQUARE (PG)

Bringing up the rear of the latest Henry James boom comes the story of the moony New York heiress (Jennifer Jason Leigh) whose dour father (Albert Finney) forbids her marriage to a dashing but penniless suitor (Ben Chaplin).

WISHMASTER (18)

Preposterous but turgid gorefest.

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Barbican 688 8891; Chelsea St 3742; Clapham Picture House 498 3323; Curzon Mayfair 369 1723; Curzon Phoenix

369 1721; Curzon West End 369 1722; Empire Leicester Sq 0890-888990; Gate Notting Hill 727 4043; Metro 794 1508; Notting Hill Coronet 737 6705; Odéon Camden Town 0181-315 4225; Odéon Haymarket 0181-315 4212; Odéon Kensington 0181-315 4214; Odéon Leicester Sq 0181-315 4215; Odéon Marble Arch 0181-315 4216; Odéon Mezzanine 0181-315 4215; Odéon Swiss Cottage 0181-315 4220; Odéon West End 0181-315

4221; Phoenix 0181-444 6789; Plaza 0990-888990; Renoir 837 8402; Richmond Picturehouse 0181-333 0030; Ritzy 733 2228; Screen on Baker St 935 2772; Screen on the Green 226 3520; Screen on the Hill 435 3366; UCI Whiteleys 0990-888 990; Virgin Chelsea 0870-907 0712; Virgin Fulham Road 0870-907 0712; Virgin Haymarket 0870-907 0712; Virgin Tottenham Court Rd 0870-907 0712; Warner Village West End 437 4343

CINEMA

WEST END

AFTERGLOW (15)
Screen on Baker Street 2.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.35pm Clapham Picture House 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm Phoenix Cinema 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm Odéon Kensington 7.20pm, 9.35pm Odéon West End 4.05pm, 8.50pm

AS GOOD AS IT GETS (15)
Virgin Fulham Road 6pm, 9.10pm ABC Pantons Street 2pm, 5pm, 8pm

THE BIG LEBOWSKI (18)
Warner Village West End 1pm, 3.50pm, 6.40pm, 9.30pm UCI Whiteleys 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm Virgin Fulham Road 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 7pm, 9.30pm ABC Tottenham Court Road 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm Odéon Camden Town 12.35pm, 3.20pm, 6pm, 8.45pm Screen on the Green 6.10pm Phoenix Cinema 1.15pm, 6.15pm

BLUES BROTHERS 2000 (PG)
Empire Leicester Square 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 9pm

DAD SAVAGE (18)
Warner Village West End 12.50pm, 3.40pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm ABC Piccadilly 1.15pm, 3.35pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm

DARK CITY (15)
Ritzy Cinema 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm, 8.10pm Plaza 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.40pm Warner Village West End 11.55am, 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 9.20pm UCI Whiteleys 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.30pm Odéon Camden Town 12.10pm, 2.25pm, 4.40pm, 6.55pm, 9.05pm Virgin Tottenham Court Road 12.20pm, 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 7pm, 9.20pm Odéon Marble Arch 11.40am, 2.10pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm, 9.40pm

DECONSTRUCTING HARRY (18)
ABC Shaftesbury Avenue 1.30pm, 3.55pm, 8.20pm, 8.50pm

DEEP IMPACT (12)
UCI Whiteleys 3.45pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm Virgin Tottenham Court Road 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm Empire Leicester Square 12.40pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm Virgin Fulham Road 12.30pm, 3.25pm, 8.10pm, 8.55pm Odéon Marble Arch 12.10pm, 3.05pm, 5.55pm, 8.50pm

THE GENERAL (15)
UCI Whiteleys 3.05pm, 6.20pm, 9.15pm UCI Chelsea 3.10pm, 8pm, 8.50pm (+ Q & A with John Boorman + Two Nudes Bathing) Notting Hill Coronet 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm Odéon Camden Town 12.05pm, 2.55pm, 5.55pm, 8.45pm Virgin Fulham Road 12.20pm, 3.10pm, 6pm, 9pm

GOOD WILL HUNTING (15)
ABC Pantons Street 2.10pm, 5.15pm, 8.10pm

THE HANGING GARDEN (15)
ABC Piccadilly 1.35pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm

HAPPY TOGETHER (15)
Ritzy Cinema 6.15pm ABC Swiss Centre 3.10pm, 7.10pm

HURRICANE STREETS (15)
Virgin Haymarket 1pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

Film Ryan Gilbey

In spirit, *Do The Right Thing* (left) is *The Battle of Algiers* relocated to Brooklyn. It focuses on the escalating racial conflicts on the hottest day of the year. The mood is first angry, then menacing, finally incendiary - the film feels like it was directed by a timebomb. Of course, Spike Lee has long since combusted, but back then he could have taken on the world and won.

Fans of the full-blooded excess of early Pedro Almodóvar films will thrill to the prologue of his new feature, Live Flesh, where a ramshackle birth on a cross-town bus ends in an umbilical cord being chewed off. Almodóvar has recently expressed an urge to reinvent himself and while Live Flesh exchanges his frivolous and lighty style for a more restrained, contemplative coolness, the picture crystallises many of his earlier themes. On release

Theatre Dominic Cavendish

Tim Supple is already putting his new resident company at the Young Vic to good use with a *Twelfth Night* that boasts enough global sounds to make Andy Kershaw purr with pleasure. *Hurdy-gurdy, gu zhang, sarangi* - you name it, they're all there to conjure an Illyria in which identities and affections are in dreamy flux. There are times when the ethereal noises risk tulling you to sleep, but strong performances - particularly from Robert Bowman as Malvolio - supply the electric shocks. 7.30pm, Young Vic, London, SE1 (0171-928 6363) to 25 Jul

The legendary set-designer Ralph Kalton wisely chose a short play by Tennessee Williams (right), *Suddenly Last Summer*, with which to make his belated directorial debut - at the age of 73. This mercurial tale of a mother's attempts to have her niece lobotomised in order to gag horrifying revelations about the death of her gay son almost demands a bold visual concept. And Kalton delivers admirably: the characters carry out their psychological warfare in front of a giant head. Linda Marlowe stars as the dastardly matriarch. Nottingham Playhouse (0115 947 0882) to 13 Jun

Literature

Judith Palmer

Peter Carey, Peter Carey, Where have you been? I've been up to London to visit the Queen. As this year's winner of the Commonwealth Writers Prize, Carey (right) got the traditional celebratory audience at Buckingham Palace yesterday morning - a tricky fixture for the novelist, one of Australia's staunchest republicans. There's a chance to ask how he fared in his Royal conversation, when he reads tonight from his Victorian thriller *Jack Maggs*, the captivating yarn of a vengeful convict and a society-novelist turned amateur mesmerist. *Blackwells*, 100 Charing Cross Rd, London WC2 (0171-292 5100) 7pm

Admission free

Wild Swans has sold eight million copies, been voted number-one non-fiction book of the century in a *Waterstones*-Channel 4 poll, and still the public appetite for *Jung Chang* continues unabated. Again tonight, Chang relives her epic personal history into exile, from Chinese red guard to peasant, doctor to steelworker, in a powerful series of nightmare memories. *British Library* (Conference Centre), 96 Euston Rd, London NW1 (0171-412 7222) 6/12.50 ctns 6.15pm

Comedy James Rampton

For many, improvisation seems rather passe. Through thick and thin over the last decade, however, *The Comedy Store Players* have carried on improving - to audiences who lap up their off-the-top-of-the-head routines. One of their number, Neil Mullarkey, has even landed a role in a movie playing... you guessed it... an improv artist. Tonight's line-up includes Tony Hawks, Doon Mackichan and Josie Lawrence (right).

Comedy Store, London SW1 (0171 344 4444)

Another group of comedy performers to have copped more than their fair share of flak over the years is *The Cambridge Footlights*, often criticised for their self-indulgence. This year they have a more professional appearance, having hired a respected director - Cal McCrystal - to put them through their paces for their latest show, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*. *Cambridge Arts Theatre* (01223 503333) to 20 Jun

LOLITA (18)

Virgin Haymarket 8.15pm Warner Village West End 11.40am, 2.55pm, 5.20pm, 8.20pm Deon Kensington 6.10pm, 9.15pm

THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK (12)
Rio Cinema 2.30pm

MARTHA - MEET FRANK, DANIEL & LAURENCE (15)
Virgin Chelsea 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm Odéon Kensington 7.20pm, 9.35pm Odéon West End 4.05pm, 8.50pm

MY SON THE FANATIC (15)
ABC Swiss Centre 1.20pm, 5.20pm, 9.10pm

NOWHERE (18)
ICA Cinema 5pm, 9pm Metro 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm

PAIN IS... (NC)
ICA 6.30pm

THE REAL BLONDE (15)
Metro 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm ABC Swiss Centre 1.10pm, 3.25pm, 5.50pm, 8.20pm

RED CORNER (15)
Virgin Tottenham 2.10pm, 5.20pm, 8.30pm UCI Whiteleys 3.30pm, 6.15pm, 9.25pm Plaza 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.55pm, 8.50pm Virgin Fulham Road 12.15pm, 3pm, 5.55pm, 8.45pm Odéon Marble Arch 12.25pm, 3.15pm, 6.10pm, 9.15pm

THE REPLACEMENT KILLERS (18)
Virgin Tottenham 12.20pm, 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm, 10.50pm UCI Whiteleys 1.20pm, 3.30pm, 5.40pm, 7.50pm, 9.50pm

SCREAM 2 (18)
Warner Village West End 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm Virgin Tottenham 12.20pm, 2.50pm, 6.10pm, 9pm

SHALL WE DANCE? (PG)
ABC Swiss Centre 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.40pm

SLIDING DOORS (15)
Virgin Tottenham 2.30pm, 5.55pm, 8.40pm, 11.20pm Ritzy Cinema 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 6.40pm, 8.40pm UCI Whiteleys 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.30pm ABC Baker Street 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm ABC Tottenham Court Road 1.25pm, 4.05pm, 6.45pm, 9.25pm Virgin Fulham Road 1.50pm, 4.1pm, 7pm, 9.15pm Empire Leicester Square 12.20pm, 2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8pm

THE TASTE OF CHERRY (PG)
Renoir 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm

TITANIC (12)
Warner Village West End 12.00pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm Plaza 2pm, 7pm

U.S. MARSHALS (15)
Warner Village West End 12.30pm, 6pm

LES VOLEURS (18)
Ritzy Cinema 2pm

WASHINGTON SQUARE (PG)
Barbican Screen 6.15pm, 8.40pm Renoir 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm Screen on Baker Street 3.05pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm Ritzy Cinema 4.10pm, 6.35pm, 9pm Virgin Haymarket 12.45pm, 3pm, 6.15pm Screen on the Hill 3.45pm, 8.45pm Gate Notting Hill 1.50pm, 4.15pm, 6.40pm Curzon Mayfair 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.35pm Clapham Picture House 1.45pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm Virgin Fulham Road 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

WESTERN (15)

Rio Cinema 8.25pm ABC Swiss Centre 2.10pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm

WILD THINGS (18)
Odéon West End 1.20pm, 6.20pm Odéon Marble Arch 12.10pm, 3.05pm, 5.55pm, 8.50pm UCI Whiteleys 3.20pm, 9.10pm

WISHMASTER (18)
Warner Village West End 3.40pm, 9pm UCI Whiteleys 9.40pm Virgin Tottenham 12.30pm, 2.40pm, 4.50pm, 7pm, 9.30pm

ACTON PARK VILLAGE (0181-896 0066)
Park Royal Park City 2pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm, 9.10pm Deep Impact 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm Mousetrap 1.20pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 9.40pm

THE REPLACEMENT KILLERS (18)
1.10pm, 3.20pm, 5.30pm, 7.40pm, 9.55pm Screen 2 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.30pm Sliding Doors 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm Titanic 2.10pm, 6pm, The Wedding Singer 1.20pm, 3.30pm, 5.50pm, 8pm

BARKING
ODEON (0181-507 8444) Barking Barking Brothers 2000 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.30pm, 8.45pm Dark City 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm Deep Impact 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm Mousetrap 12.55pm, 2.55pm, 4.55pm, 7.55pm, 9.55pm Wishmaster 1.20pm, 3.30pm, 5.50pm, 8pm

BARNET
ODEON (0181-315 4210) B High Barnet The Big Lebowski

WEDNESDAY RADIO

PICK OF THE DAY

Ho hum, it can't be helped: World Cup 98 gets underway this afternoon with live coverage of the opening ceremony and Brazil vs Scotland (3.30pm RS); that's followed by Nicky Campbell's World Cup Phone-In (6.30pm RS, right) and Morocco vs Norway (7.55pm RS). By way of a warm-up, you could try Ruscoe's World Cup Special (1pm RS); but probably best

stick to Radcliffe and Lard (2pm R1), making fools of themselves in a café in St Denis. The football-hating aesthete can find consolation in Night Waves (10.45pm R3), which tonight includes a discussion of the life and fiction - not that the two were ever easy to separate - of William Beckford, English eccentric and author of the oriental fantasy *Vathek*. ROBERT HANKS



with Libby Purves.

10.00 The World Tonight.
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Master George. Beryl Bainbridge's latest novel is abridged by Pauline Wallis. Organised as an account of the taking of six photographs, the book explores the feelings and lives of three people who are each dependent on the son of a well-to-do Victorian family. "1850 - a Well Lifted". Read by Con O'Neill (8/10).
11.00 The Way It Is: Satire, sketches and a hard look behind the week's media events from Sanjay Bhaskar, Simon Evans and Dave Lamb.
11.30 The Cheese Shop Presents...
12.00 News.
12.30 The Late Book: Psycho.
12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00 As World Service.
5.30 World News.
5.35 Shipping Forecast.
5.40 Inshore Forecast.
5.45 Prayer for the Day.
5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

the Caribbean and African-American communities.
10.00 The Piano "Figures of Fantasy": In a fantasy, composers have structural freedom to explore their musical ideas, but for the romantic composer Robert Schumann, the fantasy was a means of expressing much more. Schumann: Fantasy in C, Op 17, Boris Barzovsky.
10.45 Night Waves: Laura Cumming explores the double life of William Beckford - English eccentric, follower of Voltaire, author of the risqué novel *Vathek*, and careful taker of letters and memoirs. She talks to Timothy Mowl whose new biography of Beckford unravels the life and legends of the romantic novelist. And, as a new prize is launched for artists working in digital technology, Laura Cumming goes surfing in search of art on the net. Will new technology attract a new audience? See *Pick of the Day*.
11.30 Jazz Notes.
12.00 Composer of the Week: Puccini (R).
1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

Radio 2
(87.5-90.9MHz FM)
6.30 Kevin Grearing and Zoe Ball.
9.00 Simon Mayo. **12.00** Jo Wiley. **2.00** Mark Radcliffe. See *Pick of the Day*. **4.00** Dave Pearce. **5.30** Steve Lamacq - the Evening Session. **8.30** Movie Update with Mark Karmode. **8.40** John Peel. **10.30** Jayne Middlemiss. **1.00** Chris Warren. **4.00 - 6.30** Chris Moyles.
Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 Alex Lester. **7.30** Sarah Kennedy. **9.30** Ken Bruce. **12.00** Debbie Thorne. **2.00** Ed Stewart. **5.00** John Dunn. **7.00** Nick Barracough. **8.00** Mike Harding. **9.00** The Andy Peebles Soul Show. **10.00** Johnnie Walker. **10.30** Richard Johnson. **12.05** Steve Madden. **3.00 - 6.00** Jeff Owen.
Radio 4
(92.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air.
9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week.
11.00 Sound Stories.
12.00 Composer of the Week: Charles Ives.
1.00 Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. American music from Bristol.
2.00 The BBC Orchestra.
4.00 Choral Evensong.
5.00 In Tune.
7.30 Performance on 3: A celebration of the stage works of Cole Porter, presented by Nicholas Grace with Rebecca Caine, Kim Criswell, Frank Hernandez, George Dvorsky, BBC Singers, BBC Concert Orchestra, conductor John McGlinn. Music includes: Let's Do It (Paris), Night and Day (Gay Divorce), Miss O'Shea Regrets (Hill Diddle), Blow, Gabriel, Blow (Anything Goes), Begin the Beguine (Jubilee), Where is the Life I Led? (Kiss Me Kate), I Love Paris (Can Can).
9.35 Postscript. 3: "Planet Brooklyn". Five programmes, this week, examining the history, culture and inhabitants of the dynamic New York borough that was once a city in its own right, and has played a major part in inventing America. Tim Marlow examines how different communities have left their mark on the borough, from the Russians who have turned the Brighton Beach area into "Little Odessa" to

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

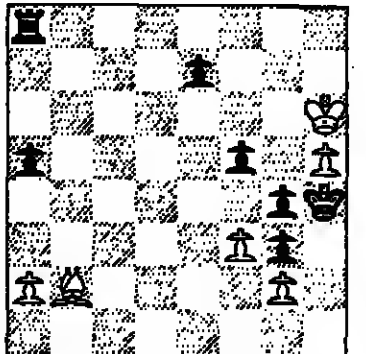
WILLIAM HARTSTON

SO ALEXEI Shirov has beaten Vladimir Kramnik to gain the right to challenge Garry Kasparov. So far, so good. But where does that leave the world chess champion?

Well, if Kasparov beats Shirov, then it leaves it exactly where we found it: with Kasparov, the world number one, as champion of his own organisation, with no formal rules to determine his challengers, and the International Chess Federation, Fide, running a lame "official" championship for the title currently held by Anatoly Karpov.

In the less likely event of Shirov beating Kasparov, however, it is doubtful that he would generally be accepted as world champion. He would still be rated behind Viswanathan Anand, and, having failed to win the Fide world championship in January, would also need to establish his supremacy over Anatoly Karpov.

The mess that was created in 1993 when Short and Kasparov left Fide to run their own match is still a long way from being sorted out. The status of world champion can only be restored in a unifying match, and the sooner the better.



Here's a composition by a true world champion: White to play and draw by Vassily Smyslov. With Black threatening gxf3, and 1.fxf3 losing quickly to 1...Kxf3 followed by f4 and f3, White's task looks hopeless. Even 1.f4, hoping to get at the black king along the black diagonal, offers no chance after 1...Raf6+.

The solution is extraordinary: 1.Bf6+!! exf3 2.f4! Rxf3+ 3.Kh7! (5.Kh7? loses after 5...Kf5) 5...Rg6 6.Kh7 Kh5 7.Kh8 Rf6+ 8.Kg7 Rg6+ 9.Kh8 and Black can make no progress since 9...Kh6 is stalemate.

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

"YOU ARE certainly one of the best card-holders that I've ever met," West grunted to South after this deal. "But it's no good holding strong hands if things go badly for you," replied South. Perhaps he should have added that it is no good either if you play them badly. After two passes East opened One Diamond and, holding his usual rock-crusher, South overcalled with Four Hearts to end the auction. West led ♠ against the heart game and, to declare, the sight of dummy was very reassuring: ♠ A and ♠ 9 - what more could he want? East overtook the lead at trick one and continued the suit.

Without a care in the world declarer ruffed the third round of diamonds high and started on trumps by leading low to dummy's nine. East took his ace and led a fourth round of diamonds to promote West's ♠ 8 for the setting trick. "That really was unlucky!" was South's initial reaction. "Still, I had 100 for honours. No score!" As well as his honours, South should have scored his vulnerable game. Barring an extraordinary distribution, the only real danger

Love ally dealer South	
North	South
♠ A J 6 3	♠ K Q J 10 7 6
♥ 9 2	♥ 9 3
♦ 8 6 5 4	♦ A K Q 10 7
♣ 7 5 2	♣ 10 9 6 4

PUZZLE

THE FOOD ran out at a party at our house the other day and everyone suddenly developed a passion for a piece of fried chicken, so they sent me out to get enough to give everybody exactly one piece.

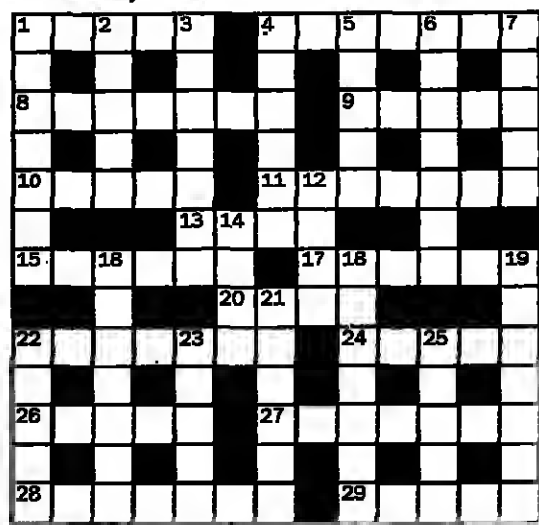
I'm afraid the mission was impossible. The local takeaway could offer me only boxes of six, nine or 20 chicken pieces and there was no way I could make up exactly the required number of pieces in such combinations. The odd thing was, though, that if there had been any greater number of people at the party, I would have been able to bring them back exactly one piece each.

How many people were at the party? (Answer tomorrow.)

This is the first in a new series of daily puzzles, old and new, that will appear in this space. If you have any favourite puzzles you would like to inflict on a wider audience, we shall be happy to consider them at Puzzles, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 4DL.

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3633 Wednesday 10 June



- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Clear one's throat (5) | 1 Part of church (7) |
| 4 Minor problems (7) | 2 Higher (5) |
| 8 Pain-killing drug (7) | 3 Female lead (7) |
| 9 Leap over (5) | 4 Trustworthy (6) |
| 10 Breed of dog (5) | 5 Conceal (5) |
| 11 Waltz composer (7) | 6 Rare (7) |
| 12 Observe (4) | 7 Locations (5) |
| 13 Endured (6) | 8 Bird (4) |
| 14 Induced (6) | 9 Norse god (4) |
| 15 Habitable isle (4) | 10 Going by sea (7) |
| 22 Visitor's income (7) | 11 Muslim veil (7) |
| 24 Picture puzzle (5) | 12 Black Sea port (6) |
| 26 Decree (5) | 13 Scornful remark (5) |
| 27 Boe (7) | 14 Prase (5) |
| 28 Crown jewels (7) | 15 Drinking bout (5) |
| 29 Pinch (5) | |

Due to a production error, the wrong clues and solutions were printed yesterday for which we apologise. The correct clues were printed on page 6 of later editions and we hope that some readers managed to solve the puzzle. Here are the solutions to Monday and Tuesday. Monday's solution: Across: 1 Paris, 4 Hols (Parasols), 8 Disrupt, 9 Rioja, 10 Slim, 11 Jetset, 12 Nightwatchman, 15 Affinity, 17 Drum, 20 Bile, 21 Impound, 22 Chat, 23 Giddy, Down: 1 Passing, 2 Routs, 3 Sabre-rattling, 4 Heretic, 5 Looks, 6 Odds, 7 Cammon, 12 Nearty, 13 Tangent, 14 Mercury, 16 Fifth, 18 Mode, 19 Sped. Tuesday's solution: Across: 1 Dye, 3 Hurry (Diary), 7 Pressman, 8 Gear, 9 Ill-treatment, 10 Alkimo, 12 Menace, 14 Unaccustomed, 18 Seah, 19 Onatorio, 20 Event, 21 Eve, Down: 1 Derrick, 2 Esel, 3 Henna, 4 Regime, 5 Yarn, 6 Embryo, 11 Macabre, 12 Mutual, 13 Codeine, 15 Niche, 16 U-bait, 17 Moose.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

Director Lawrence Kasdan and his cast have made a more highly thought of in the US than in her native Britain - a definite case of a prophet without honour in her own land. In the offbeat black comedy, *I Love You to Death* (8pm Sky Movies Gold, right), she stars as a wife who schemes with her mother (Joan Plowright) to do away with her philandering husband (Kevin Kline). Despite the odd language, this is a typically engaging offering from

James Hampton



Sky Movies Screen 1
8.00 Through the Olive Trees (1994) (5/10). **9.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **10.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **11.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **12.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **1.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **2.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **3.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **4.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **5.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **6.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **7.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **8.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **9.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **10.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **11.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **12.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **1.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **2.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **3.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **4.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **5.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **6.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). **7.00** The Untouchables (1960) (5/10). 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